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ORGANISER

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OF
EUROPE

WITHERING EUROPE?

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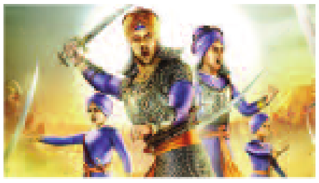

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READERS' FORUM

ORGANISER
The Real Incursion

Need of National Vision

APROPOS "China's Invisible Warfare", *Organiser*, December 22, 2022. For some vested interest and linguistics boundary disputes within Indian territory has become more sensitive than international border dispute such as India & China, Indo-Pak, Indo-Bangladesh. For the sake and interest of their respective state threatening language of bellows and sacrifice is being raised by them frequently. Some time we feel that such things are taking place due to lack of National vision consequently national integrations may come into trouble. See that under any circumstances the same should be kept intact.

SRIDHAR.V.KULKARNI, *Maharashtra*

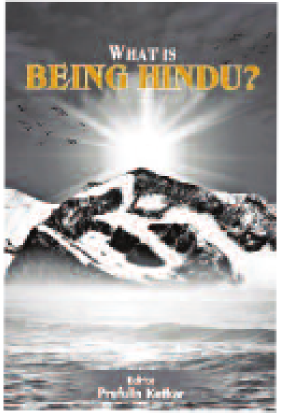
Comprehensive and Cumulative Budget

APROPOS "NAMO 1.0 Governance influence will exist on Budget 2023-24", *Organiser*, December 21, 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi always gives importance to Qualitative Human Resources Upgradation from Primary Education to till Post graduation; for New Education Policy bring to upgrade the conceptual and technical knowledge and skills of the students at the choice of them to avail option of medium, including professional courses in the regional languages. Now a day, funds allocation to Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan & UGC is evident in the upgradation of infrastructure for schools, colleges and universities to create an environment with best practices for the benefit of students. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's perception of Skill India and Digital India is for upgrading the Quality on par with international standards and even better for our products and services with Make in India as a model for generating employment opportunities.

AJAY JOSHI, *Ghaziabad*

What is Being Hindu

RECENTLY I have received a book from *Organiser* weekly titled "WHAT IS BEING HINDU". It contents various remarkable articles written by famous eminent thinkers & philosophers. The book opened my eyes to the knowledge of our Hindu, Hinduism, Hindutva, specially wish to mention the articles of our Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat, and Ranga Hari. In my opinion editor Prafulla Ketkar has given this valuable book on right time and he deserves all credits for this. In my opinion everybody should read this remarkable and valuable book.



PRK MENON, *Kerala*

Destroying Diversity of Indian Wedding Wear

UNION "Bharatiya Attire: How Bollywood Destroyed India's Diverse Ethnic Wear", *Organiser*, December 15, 2022, Even though designers like Sabyasachi Mukherjee spun a narrative of Indian wear amongst his international clientele and ensured it caught the fancy of the world when actors like Anushka Sharma, Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone wore his creations in their weddings, it led to the creation of a boring moldboard for all to follow. This was detrimental to the local luxury weaves and crafts of different Indian States.

SAUMYA AGGARWAL, *Banaras*

Editorial

Congress' Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

There is a psychological ailment that encompasses both obsessions and compulsions. Usually, this disorder increases distress and anxiety. The person grapples with unwarranted thoughts and fears that lead to specific repetitive behaviour patterns. This ailment is known as Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). On both the issues of Veer Savarkar and the border tension with China, the Congress party under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi is showing similar symptoms.

Congress objected to installing Veer Savarkar's portraits and others in the Karnataka Assembly. The newly elected Congress President crossed the line by almost saying that no one contributed to the freedom struggle except Congress. Why do the Nehru-Gandhi Congress attack and abuse one of the greatest ever revolutionaries ever?

Since Independence, Nehru-Gandhi family-led Congress tried to monopolise the legacy of the freedom struggle. The Seventy-Five years celebrations brought out many facets of our glorious resistance and victories against European colonial aggression since 1498. Congress led the last leg of our Independence Movement as a forum, not a political party. Even then, many strands of the freedom struggle existed which defected or disagreed with the Congress's ways of dealing with the British and Islamic fundamentalists. Leaders like Sri Aurobindo, Bhagat Singh, Dr B R Ambedkar, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, etc., represented those various paths. Veer Savarkar symbolises one of those legacies where he inspired many armed revolutionaries, articulated a thesis on Hindutva, initiated social reforms and opposed the partition of Bharat on religious lines. Even after the Independence, Savarkar criticised and exposed the Nehru Government's timid and confused foreign and defence policy. In other words, Savarkar represents a comprehensive ideological challenge to the Nehruvian ideology, hence, the obsession with attacking Savarkar and his legacy.

The OCD on the China issue is even problematic for the dynastic Congress. Bharat's contentious border with China is exclusively Nehru's legacy. The Himalayan Blunders of recognising Chinese claims over Tibet, gifting the UNSC permanent seat to Communist China and following the path of unilateral pacifism - all these steps together have manufactured the non-existent dispute on the borders. Subsequently, the border infrastructure was kept underdeveloped and justified as a strategy that even the Defence Minister in UPA Government, Shri A K Antony, had accepted in 2013. In 2007, the Congress party's think tank Rajiv Gandhi Foundation received funding of Rs Ninety Lacs in the name of 'other expenses'. In 2008, the Congress party signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Beijing with the Communist Party of China (CPC) to exchange high-level information and cooperation. Rahul Gandhi visited the Chinese Embassy during the Dokhlam crisis. With such a dubious past, Congress is trying to corner Modi Government with the words like 'Chinese beat up our soldiers on the borders' does not sound just ridiculous but also suspicious. What was the agenda behind the same? Is Rahul Gandhi under some compulsion trying to peddle the Chinese narrative in Bharat? Or is it a disorder to cover the past mistakes of the family-run party?

Now, we are revising and reasserting our position on the borders, as Savarkar had suggested. Our border infrastructure has improved, and defence preparedness is catching up with China. Our armed forces are confident about their ground operations without any political interference. Congress is trying to ridicule their bravery - obviously a sign of some obsession or compulsion. Some medical and psychological treatment is necessary for such symptoms. Congress should introspect and meditate instead of indulging in Yatras to connect the Bharat Todo forces with the party. Otherwise, the arrogance of 'we solely fought for national Independence' will further erode the relevance of the dynastic party and compel it to rely on some external help to keep floating politically.

twitter @PrafullaKetkar

> **"Nothing is lost in proclaiming wishes for world peace, prosperity and brotherhood. But so long as India does not have any effective practical remedy or measures to check the transgressions, such visits have no more than a formal status. While crying from the rooftops about these principles it was worth noting that China, by swallowing Tibet, had ruthlessly trampled those very principles of world peace, brotherhood and peaceful co-existence. That was the funniest part of the whole deal, and it at once raised doubts in Indian minds about the bona fides of China and Chou En-Lai."**
>
> *—Swatantryaveer Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, in an Interview with the Kesari (Marathi daily) on Bharat-China diplomacy, July 4, 1954*

A view of hospital in China

CAUGHT IN ITS 'VIRUS WEB'

IS THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT LOSING CONTROL OVER COVID-19 MANAGEMENT AS THE CASES CONTINUE TO INCREASE IN THE COUNTRY? EPIDEMIOLOGISTS PREDICT AT LEAST THREE WAVES OF THE VIRUS WOULD HIT THE COUNTRY DURING WINTER

ORGANISER BUREAU

It is certain that the Chinese Government was "under-prepared" as it decided to end its zero-COVID policy abruptly after people held protests across the country.

The Chinese Government has so far remained silent on the number of deaths. However, the Chinese authorities have warned of successive waves of COVID infections in the coming months, as cases continue to increase after the lifting of restrictions earlier this month. Wu Zunyou, the chief epidemiologist at the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, said "the current outbreak would peak this winter and run in three waves for about three months." Wu Zunyou made the remarks at a press conference in Beijing.

According to Wu, "the first wave would run from now until mid-January. A second wave would likely follow soon after, triggered by the mass travel of hundreds of millions of people across the country for the Lunar New Year starting on January 21."

He has predicted "China will face a third wave from late February to mid-March after people returned to work from the holidays." The wave is expected to be triggered by the mass travel ahead of the Lunar New Year holiday, which falls on January 21 as people travel to their hometowns to celebrate the day.

Notably, the work in hospitals in China has been slowing down as they face twin problems – running out of beds due to a large number of patients and health officials getting infected, *The Hong Kong Post* reported citing western media reports. Meanwhile, pharmacies are running out of stock due to an increase in demand and have a scant possibility of replenishment.

According to experts, China is poorly prepared for a drastic exit as the country is facing a shortage of strengthening the elderly vaccination rate, intensive care capacity in hospitals, and stockpiling antiviral medications.

According to the projections by three professors at the University of Hong Kong, a nationwide reopening could lead to up to 684 deaths per million people under the current conditions. As China has a population of 1.4 billion people, it would amount to 964,400 deaths.

Meanwhile, lifting, COVID-19 restrictions in all provinces

> In view of upcoming festivals and New Year celebrations, States also need to focus on ensuring effective awareness within the community on adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour which includes use of masks, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene practices, besides following physical distancin
>
> — Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Health Minister

> Vaccination drive should be conducted in all the age groups and people should come forward and get vaccinated. Parents are sometimes hesitant to get their kids vaccinated as the children mostly show mild symptoms of Covid. But it is better to be prepared, so everyone should get the vaccine:
>
> — Dr Randeep Guleria, Former Director, AIIMS

WILL NEW COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN CHINA IMPACT INDIA?

Keeping in mind, the rising number and rapid resurgence of Covid Cases in China, the Indian authorities have issued certain precautionary guidelines, measures and advisories to states to take on the formidable Covid Challenge for the third time. Additionally, the Health Minister of India, Mansukh Mandaviya has asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to stop his Bharat Jodo Yatra which can be potentially dangerous for the spread of the virus at a large scale. CEO and Founder of the Serum Institute of India, Adar Poonawalla stated that there is no need to panic. Although the cases from China are concerning, the vaccination track and coverage will soften the impact of the Corona Outbreak. He also added that all citizens must follow the guidelines set by the Government of India.

The Union Health Ministry has also urged all the states and union territories to boost genome sequencing to keep track of the emerging variants. Health secretary Rajesh Bhushan had said that the exercise will help in timely detection of newer variants if any. As per Vijaynanad a Covid Analyst, the China Covid Crisis and the current variants in China are only Omicron sub-lineage BA.2.75, BA.5, BQ.1, XBB. These are also found in the rest of the World. Therefore, according to him the current covid Crisis in China won't have much impact on India.

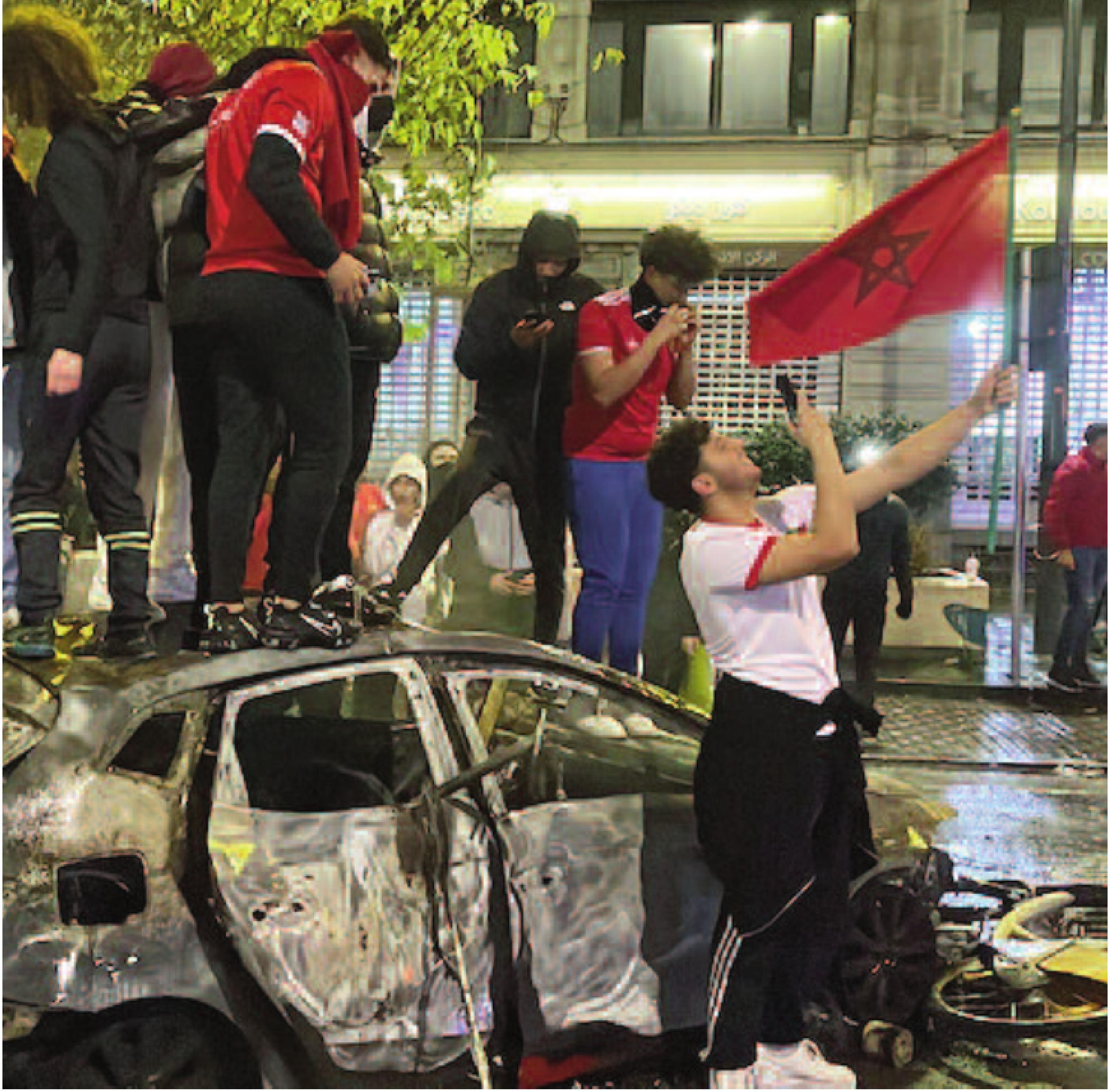
India has detected these strains and data from India's SARS CoV-2 Genomic Surveillance Program or INSACOG.BF.7 and has been present for several months. ■

will result in hospital demands witnessing a 1.5 to 2.5 times increase in hospital capacity, as per the study. The situation can be avoided if China gives booster shots and anti-viral drugs to people. If the fourth-dose vaccination covers 85 per cent and antiviral coverage reaches 60 per cent, then the death toll can be lowered by 26 per cent to 35 per cent, the study, which is funded partly by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Hong Kong Government, the report said.

According to a report, city streets appeared quiet over the weekend in Beijing and Shanghai despite the easing of restrictions. As the COVID-19 cases continue to surge, Xi Jinping Government is facing questions like what the Government was doing other than locking people in homes and conducting mass testing. Furthermore, how the cases continue to rise if people's movement was restricted all these months? Notably, China has been adhering to stringent COVID-19 restrictions since the emergence of the virus.

Chinese authorities have been imposing lockdowns, travel restrictions, and conducting mass testing in order to control the spread of COVID-19. However, the restrictions were eased after people held protests across the country against the measures. ■

(Data given in the report as on December 22)



Football fans sporting the flag of Morocco stand on top of a burnt out car in Brussels, after Morocco defeated Belgium at the World Cup in Qatar

KARMA IS UNFORGIVING

ISLAMIC RADICALISATION OF EUROPE IS A WIDE PHENOMENON. BELGIUM, WHICH ALSO COLONISED AFRICA, HAS A LARGE MUSLIM POPULATION, ONE OF THE MOST RADICAL AND DANGEROUS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

OPINION

FRANCOIS GAUTIER

France-Based Senior Journalist

The Football World Cup in Qatar gave us a fair assessment of where Islam stands at the moment. In the first instance, it may have been a mistake, however brilliant the final was, to award the World Cup to Qatar, a country that sponsors and encourages Muslim fundamentalism all over the world and uses football to further its aims. It owes for instance the best French football team, Paris Saint Germain of which Kilyan Mbappé, the young and brilliant French striker, is a member. It is a proprietor too of the top English team, Manchester City. However well this World Cup has been organised—and we must give the Qataris credit for that—the Qatari crowds were highly partisan: booing loudly all the White teams, and cheering madly for the Muslim or non-White players.

Secondly, the Morocco-France match gave us many clues about the radicalisation of Islam. Firstly, the Moroccan players, were brutal, using tackles, to hurt and maim; while, even if they were barely touched, they would scream and writhe on the ground as if mortally wounded. They were bad losers also: to Croatia for third place, nearly beating up the referee at the final whistle. But even in victory (over Spain), what did they do? They urged on TV people to join Islam, saying: "come to the wind, come to the truth". Is that football, is that how it is supposed to bring people together beyond religion and race? All this talk about 'no racism' in football, actually serves Muslims, who take refuge behind it, if you say anything against Islam, however true it may be.

> MOROCCO-FRANCE MATCH GAVE US MANY CLUES ABOUT THE RADICALISATION OF ISLAM. FIRSTLY, THE MOROCCAN PLAYERS, WERE BRUTAL, USING TACKLES, TO HURT AND MAIM; WHILE, EVEN IF THEY WERE BARELY TOUCHED, THEY WOULD SCREAM AND WRITHE ON THE GROUND AS IF MORTALLY WOUNDED

Thirdly, Muslims all over Europe not only rioted when Morocco lost, but even when they beat Spain, and even more when France lost to Argentina. In Paris, my family were advised not to go out, both on the night of Morocco's loss to France and during and after the finals, and police were deployed in the thousands on Champs Elysées and all French major towns. And who rioted? French Moroccans, but also Tunisians Algerians and from various African countries, all holding French passports, all beneficiaries of the vast and generous French social system, which gives you free medicals, free money, the more children you have (and we know Muslims are procreating to outnumber Europeans in nations where they live), subsidised transport, sports facilities, parks etc). As usual Muslims in Europe, not only put Islam before their nationalities, having no faithfulness or gratitude to their adopted countries, but strike these very countries

VIOLANCE IN EUROPE DURING FIFA WORLD CUP 2022

Clash in Paris after France beat Morocco in FIFA World Cup 2022

- Police used water cannon and teargas after Morocco's migrants brought havoc to the centre of Brussels following Morocco's shock 2-0 FIFA World Cup 2022 win over Belgium in Qatar. Dozens of fans smashed shop windows, threw fireworks and torched vehicles
- Dozens of rioters torched cars, set electric scooters on fire and pelted cars with bricks. Police moved in after one person suffered facial injuries, said Brussels police spokeswoman Ilse Van de Keere reported France24
- Clashes erupted in Paris on December 10, 2022, after Morocco defeated Portugal in FIFA World Cup. Morocco's supporters indulged into violence on the streets, forcing the riot police to use teargas
- Morocco fans in cities across the world clash with police as celebrations over historic World Cup penalty shoot-out victory against Spain in Qatar, reported Daily Mail

> THIS MUSLIM INTELLIGENTSIA, SOMETIMES, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, FEELS THAT ISLAM IS ESSENTIAL AND MORE IMPORTANT THAN THEIR FRENCH ATAVISM, IN THEIR INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL MAKE UP - AND IT AFFECTS THEIR ATTITUDES AND DECISIONS. IT GETS EVEN MORE COMPLEX: IN FRANCE, AT LEAST, ITS BECOMING FASHIONABLE TO BE A MUSLIM

which give them shelter.

Now let's look at it from a Hindu-dharmic point of view. It's important and as a journalist, I have always tried to scrutinise the behind the scenes, the occult and invisible forces that move people like puppets. If you look at France and its (huge) problem with Islam, its ALSO karma. France colonised, sometimes brutally (but it was acceptable then) North African countries: Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in particular. It not only exploited its people, but after reluctantly giving them independence, it employed Arabs as laborers, coolies, mason helpers, trash pickers, jobs that the French did not want to do anymore (and the French dare to castigate castes in India!). They had little respect for them, when I was a kid, they were called 'bicots', which could be loosely translated as 'goats' in English. Now naturally the grandchildren of these coolies are angry and vent openly their vengeance. And the ironic Karma is: the French football team that narrowly lost to Argentina in the final of the 22 Football World Cup, was mostly constituted of African immigrants children !

Moroccan supporters light up a fire in a street after Morocco's football team lost in FIFA World Cup semi-final against France, in Brussels

MUSLIMS POPULATION IN DIFFERENT PLACES OF UNITED KINGDOM

Birmingham	30%	Oldham	24%
Bradford	30%	Rochdale	19%
Manchester	22%	Barking/Dagenham	24%
Leicester	23%	Brent	21%
Blackburn/Darwen	35%	Newham	35%
Luton	33%	Redbridge	31%
Slough	29%	Tower Hamlets	40%
Pendle	26%	Westminster	20%

But it gets more complicated: many of these French muslim youth of today are well educated brilliant people - stand up comics, actors, film directors, artists, writers, journalists – 21st century France owes them a lot and its culture is being remoulded by them. The karma is that, at the same time, like others, this Muslim intelligentsia, sometimes, more often than not, feels that Islam is essential and more important than their French atavism, in their intellectual and spiritual make up - and it affects their attitudes and decisions. It gets even more complex: in France, at least, its becoming fashionable to be a Muslim: I play basketball when I am in Paris, under the Eiffel tower, and many of the players are either French Muslims or Muslim blacks: the few white players that play with them, imitate the Muslims in their way of greeting (you know that complicated joining fists, knuckles etc); the girls who look on, are in awe of these tall, nice (I must stress here 'nice' as me being older and a white guy, is always made to feel welcome by them), excellent players and naturally, it leads more and more to mixed couples. We know that their children will be brought into Islam, with Muslim names and read the Koran. No love jihad, here it's just happening naturally. Karma is a vicious circle: France and other countries who colonised Arabs, are paying theirs right now – once its paid, it's burnt & gone; Islam is reaping the good karma of having been exploited, by coming-up in many areas, whether sports, or other fields.

We see that this radicalisation of Islam is a wide phenomenon in Europe. Belgium, which also colonised Africa, has a large Muslim population, one of the most radical and dangerous in the EU – indeed the Paris Bataclan attacks of 2015 and the murderous Brussels airport bombing, all came at the hands of Belgium Muslims. Germany, which has a large Turkish minority, also witnesses periodic traumas: the 2015-16 New Year Eve, for instance, saw 200 women assaulted and sometimes raped by Muslims. England, though it is not part of European Union, has a twofold problem with its large Muslim population: on the one hand they engage in periodic rioting, such as this year's attack in Leicester on Hindus; and on the other, British Muslims, have understood that if they take power politically, they can change the whole set-up of British society and eventually impose the Sharia. Hence many mayors, such as in London, are Muslims.

Finally, Baltic nations like Sweden, or Norway, long immune to these problems, were caught sleeping, as the immigrants they innocently allowed to seep in, have started making heir presence felt by rapes, attacks, demonstrations etc. It should be stressed here that Muslims control in Europe a lot of the taxis network, with Uber, for instance, which has a majority of Muslim drivers. This allows them to create a network of communication and transport, which can easily trigger riots and even bring quickly demonstrators on the spot. In one word, Europe has a huge Muslim radicalisation problem, which so far it has refused to acknowledge, except maybe, for France's Macron, who forced many mosques to close down.

Islam could put a stop to the bad karma they are generating now, for example by not rioting. ■

Violance after the semi-final match between Morocco and France supporter

NEW LAUNCHPAD FOR JIHAD

- People in the UK believe that Islam is a threat to the British way of life and 32 per cent said that there were "no-go areas" in Britain where sharia law dominated and non-Muslims could not enter. The level of crime could be understood from the fact that Muslim population in the United Kingdom, which constitutes merely 4 per cent of the total population in the country, but 18 per cent of prison inmates in the UK are Muslims. Situation in Farnce is also deteriorating as the country has been targeted by Islamists the most in recent years, According to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation report, From 2015 to December 2018, the number of people killed in terrorist attacks in France was 249.
- In Belgium Groups like Sharia4Belgium, Resto du Tawheed, and the Zerkani network are deeply involved in jihadi radicalisation. According to the official number, by mid-2016, about 450 Belgian individuals travelled to Syria and many of them joined terrorist Organisation Islamic State.
- Gothenburg, in western Sweden is one of the European cities from which most people joined Islamic extremist groups, according to 'The Local'. According to media reports, Sweden became an exporter of jihad, from where more than 300 people went Syria and Iraq to fight Islamic Jihad.

MAGNETIC MAHARASHTRA

Major Industrial Clusters

- **Mumbai-Thane-Raigad | 15,000 Acres**
  Engineering | Food Processing | Auto & Components | Chemicals | Pharmaceutical
- **Pune-Chakan-Talegaon-Satara | 8,000 Acres**
  Data Centre | Gems & Jewelry | Engineering | Food Processing | Auto & Components | ESDM Logistics
- **Nashik-Malegaon-Ahmednagar | 5,000 Acres**
  Food Processing | Medical Equipment | ESDM | Engineering
- **Aurangabad (AURIC, DMIC)-Jalna | 8,000 Acres**
  Food Processing | Auto & Components | ESDM | Textile
- **Nagpur – Amravati | 4,000 Acres**
  Aerospace & Defence | Engineering | Textiles | Food Processing

Maharashtra: The economic powerhouse

- **Largest GDP in India**
  Maharashtra's GDP size is $480 billion; accounting for 16% of India's GDP
- **Largest share in FDI**
  Attracted $154 billion FDI in 2000-2020; accounting for 30% of India's share.
- **Leader in Manufacturing**
  Maharashtra contributes to 15% of the industrial output in India.
- **Excellent industrial area in IPRS**
  As per the Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS) report released by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Maharashtra's most favourable industrial zones.
- **Excellent Law and order**
  This is known for progressive administration and policy continuity.
- **Leader in Exports**
  Maharashtra has the highest value of exports; accounting for 21% of India's exports
- **Best Quality Workforce**
  Maharashtra has the highest employable talent in India at 68%.
- **Robust Infrastructure**
  3 International & 13 domestic airports, 2 major & 53 minor ports, and largest power capacity.

Total Investment Mobilised – INR 6,25,533 Cr

Investment Intentions - INR 2,74,202 Cr
(June 2020 - May 2022)

Foreign Direct Investment – INR 3,51,331 Cr
(October 2019 - September 2022)

Strategic investment cooperation agreements with key corridor partners:

- US-India Strategic Partnership Forum, (USISPF) for USA
- Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, (KOTRA) for South Korea
- United Kingdom – India Business Council, (UKIBC) for the UK
- World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA)
- Indo-French Chamber of Commerce & Industry (IFCCI)
- AFRICA INDIA ECONOMIC FOUNDATION (AIEF)

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4(A), 12th Floor, World Trade Centre Complex 1, Cuffe Parade, Colaba, Mumbai - 400 005.
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Key Reforms Initiated

1. **Plug and Play Infrastructure - 6 Regions | 5950 Acres | 450 Sheds**
   Allowing an FDI investor to utilize a ready to use infrastructure complete with affordable rental sheds, comprehensive utilities, expat housing, modular spaces in a 100% compliant ecosystem.
2. **Maha Parwana - 20+ Departments | 100+ Permissions**
   A single window clearance system for FDI investors that meet statutory norms to start operations within 48 hours.
3. **Investor First Programme - Assigned to 123 MoU Partners**
   Relationship Manager (RM) and Relationship Executive (RE) are assigned to investors for overall co- ordination and providing necessary support to the Investors on continuous basis.

Investment Intentions Signed

As a part of COVID economic recovery program, the Industries department along with MIDC signed 123 MoU's with key investors in the months of June 2020 to May 2022 amounting to INR 6,21,755 Crores and potential employment generation of 4,30,202 jobs.

- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, June & July 2020 - INR 17,686 Cr | 14,025 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs – 15 | Key Sectors – Chemicals, Auto, ESDM, Oil & Gas | Key Countries – USA, Japan, Singapore, South Korea
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, November 2020 - INR 34,829 Cr | 23,182 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs – 15 | Key Sectors – Data Centers, Logistics, Electronics | Key Countries – Spain, United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, India
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, December 2020 - INR 61,042 Cr | 2,55,380 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs – 25 | Key Sectors – Data Centers, Logistics, Electronics | Key Countries – India
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, July 2021 - INR 16,500 Cr. | 5,000 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs - 2 I Key Sectors - Petroleum, Natural Gas, Renewable Energy I Key Countries - Australia, India
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, September 2021 - INR - 35,500 Cr. | 10,000 Jobs**
  No of MoU's - 2 I Key sectors - Renewable Energy | Key countries - India
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, October 2021 - INR - 2,823 Cr. | 1,250 Jobs**
  No of MoU's - 1 I Key sectors - Electric Vehicle | Key countries - UK
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, November 2021 - Dubai Expo 2020 - Rs.15,617 Cr. I 11,385 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs - 25, I Key Sectors - Logistics, Auto Components, Oxygen Manufacturing, Data Centres, Bio-Fuel I Key Countries - Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Korea, Germany, Italy, and India.
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, December 2021 and January 2022 - INR - Rs.5,512 Cr. I 9,980 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs - 13 I Key Sectors - Bio Fuel, IT-ITES, Technical Textiles, Chemical, Auto, Electronics I Key Countries - France and India.
- **Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, May 2022 - INR - Rs.80,479.78 Cr. I 96,705 Jobs**
  No. of MoUs - 25 I Key Sectors - IT Parks, IT-ITES and Data Centres, Textiles, Food Processing, Paper & Pulp, Engineering and Steel, Renewable Energy, Logistics, Oil and Gas I Key Countries - Singapore, Indonesia, USA, South Korea and Japan.

Violent protest in Brussels

HISTORY, HYPOCRISY & HURDLE

RADICALISATION OF MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN EUROPE STARTED IN THE 1960S DUE TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD. FOUNDED IN EGYPT IN 1928 BY ISLAMIC SCHOLAR HASSAN AL-BANNA, THE JAMĀ ʿAT AL-IKHWĀN AL-MUSLIMĪN, ALSO KNOWN AS MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD, HAS SPREAD INTERNATIONALLY, INFLUENCING VARIOUS ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

OPINION

SARDAR SANJAY MATKAR

Over 35 years international experience in geo-politics, anti-terrorism strategy and grassroot governance

The 28 countries of the European Union [EU] are home to about 25 million Muslims. Their presence is currently the basis of controversy, debate, fear and in some parts of Europe, outright hatred. Never before has the European continent witnessed this level of mutual suspicion between mainstream European societies and the Muslims. There is increasing fear and opposition to European Muslims, who are perceived as a threat to national identity, domestic security and the main-stream social fabric. Mainstream society in Europe can be loosely defined as that section of the population which believes in Christianity and its value system.

Historically, Islamic globalisation began as early as the late Middle Ages (500 to 1400–1500 AD), the Muslims' presence in Europe was only of the fringes of the continent, starting at the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) and spreading along the Mediterranean shores to other parts of Southern Europe. Parts of the Ottoman Caliphate's Balkan territory became Muslim in the early modern period (1440-1500), while Tartar settlers brought Islam to the Baltic region. In the late 19th century, Muslim migration to Western Europe was largely connected to the empires. The first clusters of networks of Muslims emerged after 1918, as a result of the Great War (as World War-1 was known) which brought thousands of Muslims into Europe and institutionalised Islam in the continent. Muslim communities emerged in three spaces -- the mosques as religious physical spaces, associations and organisations as legal spaces, and constructive and intellectual spaces, expressed through Islamic newspapers and media. Essentially, these three spaces were occupied by individuals who identified themselves as Muslims, and focused primarily on the formation of Islamic organisations identified by a common religion, rather than diverse ethnic or linguistic backgrounds.

Radicalisation of these Muslim communities in Europe started in the 1960s due to the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood. Founded in Egypt in 1928 by Islamic scholar Hassan al-Banna, the Jamāʿat al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn, also known as Muslim Brotherhood, has spread internationally, influencing various Islamic movements from charitable organisations to political parties. These organisations have different names, but a singular goal – jihad against the world.

While the Brotherhood's radical ideas have shaped the beliefs of generations of Islamists over the past two decades, it has lost much of its power and appeal in the Middle East, crushed by harsh repression from local Arab regimes and rejected by the younger generation of Islamists. Europe, however, has become an incubator for the Islamist political process. Since the early 1960s, Muslim Brotherhood members and sympathisers have moved to Europe and slowly but steadily established a wide and well-organised network of mosques, charities, and Islamic organisations, with the focus on expanding Islamic law throughout Europe.

The radicalised Islamic students who migrated to Europe from the Middle-East 45 years ago and their descedents are now leaders of local Muslim communities who engage with Europe's mainstream political elite. Funded by generous and constant financial contributions from Qatar and Saudi Arabia's Wahhabi community, they lead and dominate a centralised network of terrorism spread across nearly every European country. With expertise in modern rhetoric and fluent in German, French and Dutch languages, these terrorist masterminds have gained acceptance with members of the European governments and the media. As the Muslim community expands rapidly due to immigration, the mainstream political parties in Europe are engaging with them as potential vote-banks.

During the 1950s and 1960s, thousands of Muslim students left the Middle East to study at German universities, drawn not only by the German institutions' technical reputations but also by a desire to escape repressive regimes. Beginning in 1954, several members of the Muslim Brotherhood fled Egypt to escape its ruler Gamal Abdel Nasser's brutal efforts to neutralise them, and West Germany provided a welcome refuge. West Germany's motivations were not based primarily on compassion for the immigrants. It was based on a political decision whereby West Germany was cutting diplomatic relations with countries who recognised East Germany. [Till November 1989, Germany was divided by the Berlin Wall into two separate countries: West Germany that was influenced by Western democratic values and East Germany that was allied with the Soviet Union]. When Syria and Egypt established diplomatic relationships with the Communist government of East Germany, the West German government decided to welcome political refugees from Syria and Egypt. Many were Muslim Brotherhood members already familiar with Germany, several of whom had cooperated with the Nazis before and during WW2.

NO
MORE
MOSQUES

> **RADICALISED ISLAMIC STUDENTS, WHO MIGRATED TO EUROPE FROM THE MIDDLE-EAST 45 YEARS AGO, THEIR DESCEDENTS ARE NOW LEADERS OF LOCAL MUSLIM COMMUNITIES, WHO ENGAGE WITH EUROPE'S MAINSTREAM POLITICAL ELITE**

MIGRATION OF MUSLIMS TO EUROPE

One of the first such members of the Brotherhood was Sa'id Ramadan, the personal secretary to Hasan al-Banna, who founded the organisation. Ramadan founded one of Germany's three main Muslim organisations, the Islamische Gemeinschaft Deutschland (Islamic Society of Germany, IGD), over which he presided from 1958 to 1968. He also co-founded the Muslim World League, a well-funded organisation which the Saudi establishment uses to spread its radical interpretation of Islam throughout the world. The US government closely monitors activities of the Muslim World League which has been regularly accused of financing terrorism. In January 2004, the US Senate Finance Committee asked the Internal Revenue Service for its records on the Muslim World League "as part of an investigation into possible links between non-governmental organisations and terrorist financing networks."

After Sa'id Ramadan, Pakistani national Fazal Yazdani led the IGD for a brief period before he was replaced by

JIHAD
UMMAH OF
JIHAD
SLAMIC
MIRATES FOR
RITAIN
AMERICA AT WAR
ISL
WILL DOM
THE WOR

A view of Muslim protesters in UK

GhalebHimmat, a Syrian origin member with Italian citizenship. During his leadership of the IGD (1973-2002) he was under scrutiny by Western intelligence agencies for his connections to terrorism. He was one of the founders of the Bank al-Taqwa aka the 'Bank of the Muslim Brotherhood' which has financed terrorism since the mid-1990s, and maybe earlier also. Himmat was helped by Youssef Nada, one of the Brotherhood's financial masterminds to run Al-Taqwa and a web of companies headquartered in locations such as Switzerland, Liechtenstein and the Bahamas, which maintain few regulations on monetary origin or destination. Both Himmat and Nada have regularly financed the activities Hamas and the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front and reportedly set-up a line-of-credit for Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda operations.

With many organisations operating under different names, the Muslim Brotherhood fools' German politicians who believe that they are consulting a spectrum of opinion while in reality it is the radical interpretation of Islam as expressed by the Muslim Brotherhood, and not that of traditional Islam. With an unending access to massive Saudi financing, the Muslim Brotherhood has managed to become the voice of the Muslims in Germany. While the Brotherhood and its Saudi financiers have consolidated their hold in Germany, they have spread like cancer across other European countries. With generous and unlimited funding from Saudi Arabia and Qatar combined with the Brotherhood's meticulous organisation structure that exploits the weaknesses of the European elites, it has gained prominent positions throughout Europe. In France the extremist Union des OrganisationsIslamiques de France (Union of Islamic Organizations of France) has become the predominant organisation in the government's Islamic Council. In Italy, the extremist Unionedelle Comunita' ed Organizzazioni Islamichein Italia (Union of the Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy) is the government's prime partner in dialogue regarding Italian Islamic issues.

> FRANCE HAS BEEN TARGETED BY MORE JIHADI ATTACKS THAN ANY OTHER EU MEMBER NATION SINCE 2014, AND THAT 300 FRENCH CITIZENS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THESE ATTACKS

While Germany is being taken over politically through radicalisation of the Muslim population, France has been the top target for Islamic radical attacks. According to official Europol data, France has been targeted by more jihadi attacks than any other EU member nation since 2014, and that 300 French citizens have been killed in these attacks. France is the 'perfect enemy' for Islamic Jihadists since it has the largest Muslim population (about 7 per cent of the population), the biggest Jewish population (1 per cent) and a very important legacy of Christianism.

France has been left struggling with the question of why it has become a prime target and how it should respond. As per President Macron, France is being targeted by terrorists because of its "freedom of expression, right to believe, or not, and its way of life." He claims that a form of "Islamist separatism" has found fertile ground for its ideals in some parts of the country. Over forty years, successive French presidents have sought to manage the state's relationship with an ethnically and religiously diverse Muslim community. In France, the concept of laïcité(secularism) enjoins a strict delineation between the state and the private sphere of personal beliefs. Designed in origin to protect individuals from state intrusion, and the state from religious influence, it has in recent years been increasingly wielded to do the exact opposite: encroaching evermore into the private sphere of Muslim citizens. From defining dress codes to diet and religious education, the state has sought to influence each of these in recent years, only to be confronted by the strength of a Republican framework where the courts have upheld the original principles of c.

The fact is that almost every country of the European Union has been the target of Islamic radicals. The EU has introduced new policies with the cooperation of its member states to track the radicalisation, funding and sponsorship of terrorism and prevent future attacks, however the EU's refusal to accept the role of Saudi Arabia and Qatar in funding terrorism is still a hurdle to be overcome. ■

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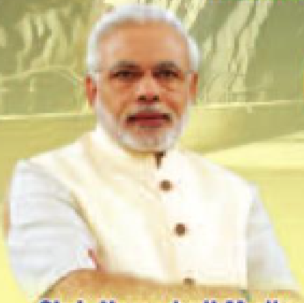
MMRDA

Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority



Shri. Narendraji Modi
Hon. Prime Minister of India

Shri. Devendraji Fadanvis
Hon: Deputy Chief Minister
Maharashtra State

Shri. Eknathji Shinde
Hon Chief Minister
Maharashtra State

Airoli Katai Naka Tunnel Cum Elevated Road

BKC- International Financial Service Centre

एम एम आर डी ए
MMRDA

Surya Regional Water Supply Scheme

Shri. S.V.R. Srinivas IAS
Metropolitan Commissioner
MMRDA

WISHING YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR-2023

ISLAM WILL CONQUER EUROPE
SHARIAH FOR THE NETHERLANDS
ISLAM WILL BE SUPERIOR
ISLAM WILL DOMINATE THE WORLD
FREEDOM CAN GO TO HELL
ENEMY OF ISLAM GEERT WILDERS DESERVES ISLAMIC

A view of Mulim protesters demanding Sharia

WEST'S RENDEZVOUS WITH SHARIA

ISLAM IS GROWING FAST IN EUROPE DUE TO IMMIGRATION AND HIGHER THAN NORMAL FERTILITY RATES. BETWEEN 2010 AND 2015, THE MUSLIM FERTILITY RATE IN EUROPE WAS (2.1). BY 2030, MUSLIM ARE PREDICTED TO FORM ABOUT 8 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION OF EUROPE

OPINION

KHALID UMAR

UK based Columnist

Our actions have consequences. Europe is going to face soon what India is facing today as a result of change in faith demographics.

ISLAMIC INVASION OF THE WEST

The latest wave of European invasion of Islam did not come through the hoofs of the marching horses but droves of asylum seekers. Only in 2015, Europe received 1.5 million of these. Every year between 900,000 to one million people get the citizenship of a member state of an EU country. 2.4 million non-EU migrants entered the EU in 2017. Eventually almost all of them will become European citizens. Most of them are from Muslim countries. When coupled with high birth rates, this is changing the face of European cities, permanently.

Let us take Sweden as a case study. A country of 10 million has close to 9 per cent Muslim population. In Western Europe, Muslims generally live in major urban areas, often concentrated in poor neighbourhoods of large cities. Overall per cent of Muslims in EU is at 5 per cent. Sweden took disproportionately high number of Muslim migrants and now they are reaping the harvest. The areas with large Muslim populations also happen to be neighbourhoods that Swedish police designate "vulnerable areas". The term refers to areas with "high levels of poverty, high levels of people of a foreign background and by having criminal networks exerting pressure on those living in or visiting these neighbourhoods." In Malmo, Muslims are 16 per cent of the population, which is tipping the city towards this anarchy. This percentage is almost the same in India; Europe, therefore, should be ready to see more riots like of Delhi and Bangalore!

Birmingham is the second largest city in the

UK after London. The city of Birmingham is also the 28th largest city in Europe, and the 17th largest city in the European Union.

The majority population of Birmingham is now from Islam. Nearly 50,000 people in the city cannot speak English. Birmingham is now a majority 'minority city'. After White British, the next biggest ethnic group in Birmingham is Pakistani, making up 13 per cent of the resident population.

You will find uncanny similarity in description of Muslim neighbourhoods, be that in Delhi, Bangalore, Bhopal, Birmingham or Paris. Islam is growing fast in Europe due to immigration and higher than normal fertility rates. Between 2010 and 2015, the Muslim fertility rate in Europe was (2.1 per cent). By 2030, Muslim are predicted to form about 8 per cent of the population of Europe. From mid-2010 to mid-2016 alone, the share of Muslims in Europe rose more than 1 percentage point, from 3.8 per cent to 4.9 per cent (from 19.5 million to 25.8 million).

By 2050, the share of the continent's population Muslim could more than double, rising to 11.2 per cent or more, depending on how much migration is allowed into Europe. Even in the unlikely event that future migration is permanently halted, the Muslim population still would rise to an estimated 7.4 per cent, due to the relative youth and high fertility rates of Europe's current Muslim residents.

Muslims are much younger and have more children than other Europeans. In 2016, the median age of Muslims throughout Europe was 30.4 years, 13 years younger than the median for other Europeans. Looking it another way, 50 per cent of all European Muslims are under the age of 30, compared with 32 per cent of non-Muslims in Europe. In addition, the average Muslim woman in Europe is expected to have 2.6 children, a full child more than the average non-Muslim woman (1.6 children).

THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHY OF EUROPEAN CITIES

Muslim population percentage in the Western capitals and main cities is exploding exponentially. As an example, the total Muslim population in London from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh is 550,000 which is 40 per cent of total Muslims in England and 12.4 per cent of the metropolitan London. The statistics for Paris, Barcelona, Rome, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Berlin are not too different.

TERRORISM IS HOME GROWN

Majority of the Muslims want to live in the West but love Sharia too. Recent terror incidents show that Europe's terrorism is home grown. If the majority of Muslims are allowed to spend their lives in their own narrow ghettos of mind, procreating, it would decisively alter the ethnic and geographic strata of the Europe in the next 40 years. Assimilation and understanding is very important otherwise Europe is going to face an upsurge of social unrest in the decades to come.

> MAJORITY OF THE MUSLIMS WANT TO LIVE IN THE WEST BUT LOVE SHARIA TOO. RECENT TERROR INCIDENTS SHOW THAT EUROPE'S TERRORISM IS HOME GROWN

THE WAY FORWARD TOWARDS PEACE

The only way is to openly and unequivocally let the Muslims know that the present narrative of Islam is not acceptable at all and declaring this is not racism. The world must support free thinking and liberal elements within the faith to revive the spirit of medieval free thinkers of Islam. The West must put a universal moratorium on the Salafi, Saudi, Takfeeri and Ahatollah's interpretation of a militant and political Islam; no non-sense in the name of freedom of religion and speech be allowed.

We must accept that the West has been complicit in helping extremism in Muslim societies. They created monsters in Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to fight communist USSR. Now, the West must pay for their sins. USA has done too much of damage in artificially changing the Middle East and trying to introduce democracy. In the 19th and the 20th centuries, the British Empire seeded conflict in the world by creating artificial boundaries.

- They must make it a long term priority to support the liberal and free thinkers in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, Afghanistan etc.
- Military and economic aid must be linked with how these countries treat their religious and ethnic minorities.
- Pakistan should be forced to abandon the blasphemy laws and reform their education system. A country surviving on the dole of IMF can't be allowed to have curriculum and laws based upon hate.
- Human rights' violations must not be any country's internal matter. The G-8 countries must fuel liberal education in these countries (as they did help create Taliban to fight USSR).

POLICING THE BORDERS IS NOT THE SOLUTION

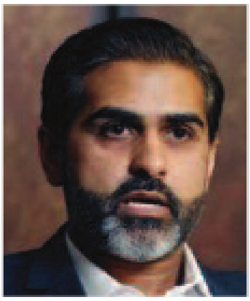
Europe can't stop immigrant boats by enacting laws or patrolling the seas. It's only by helping to create safe and peaceful societies in the hubs of unrest that the whole world can stay safe, at large. ■

Leicester City in England's East Midlands region has witnessed a sharp increase in targeted attacks against the Hindu community. The orgy of violence by Islamist began soon after India clinched victory against Pakistan in the group stage match of the Asia Cup on August 28, 2022

UK'S MYSTERIOUS SILENCE

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UK AS A RESULT OF THE RISE OF ISLAMISTS ARE CREATING INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS THAT ARE CREATING PROBLEMS FOR THE GLOBAL ORDER. HOWEVER, THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES AND THE MEDIA ARE RELUCTANT TO EVEN IDENTIFY THE ISLAMIST AGITATORS WHO ATTACKED HINDUS IN THE LEICESTER RIOTS

OPINION



WASIQ WASIQ
UK-Based Writer and Commentator

The riots that broke out during the months of August and September in the UK's city of Leicester between Hindu and Muslim youth sent shockwaves globally. The riots were picked up by a number of national as well as international publications, in addition to featuring heavily on Bharat's news channels.

MISGUIDED BELIEF

However, what wasn't picked up, or at least, what wasn't given sufficient attention was the apparent reluctance of authorities and the media to describe the Islamist agitators that played a significant role in the riots. The reluctance to name Islamism and those who subscribe to this ideology, appears to be rooted in the misguided belief that somehow it would increase Islamophobic sentiments. Yet the evidence to suggest such a claim has any basis in established facts is tenuous. To understand how we have got to this point, we must look at who is making this claim and what the response to it has been.

The National Association of Muslim Police (NAMP), is a body that has its members in the UK Police force. In 2019 and now in 2022, the NAMP sought to start the debate about whether using terms such as Islamist, Islamism and Jihadi were appropriate to be used to describe individuals who carry out acts of terror. It was the NAMP's belief that these terms were open to abuse and could lead to demonisation of Muslims. As part of this campaign, the NAMP cited survey data that suggested that there was a belief that Islamophobic sentiments would increase if these terms were used.

Yet, basing the claims on the belief that Islamophobic sentiments would increase because these terms are used is not good enough. To request or make changes to police policy, there needs to be strong evidence that supports the case. Without it can be argued that there is a belief that Islamophobic sentiments do not increase. In the case of the latter, that is an established fact because the former does not provide strong evidence that suggests the contrary. The NAMP citing survey data is therefore tenuous and cannot be taken with the seriousness that it expects.

It is perhaps no surprise that in 2019, the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, Cressida Dick, did not agree with the NAMP's request. In an interview with the *LBC* Radio host Nick Ferrari, Dick was asked whether the terms would be dropped. The Commissioner of the Police confirmed that they would not be dropped. It is important to note that the terms would not be dropped because the use of them would increase Islamophobic sentiments, but rather, because the terms themselves are appropriate to use.

The NAMP, however, has suggested that the terms are not appropriate and that there are more appropriate terms that can be used in place of Islamism, Islamist and Jihadists. The suggested terms include: "Daesh inspired terrorism","Irhabism" and "Anti-Western Extremism". While these terms may accurately capture some aspects of the ideology driving these terrorists, they omit a sad fact that the Muslim Ummah must face up to the fact that there is something Islamic about this form of terrorism.

INTERPRETING ISLAM IN A WAY TO JUSTIFY VIOLENCE

One of the realities facing the Muslim Ummah globally is the fact that there is no one version of Islam, but rather, many versions of it. There are some fundamentals that all Muslims agree upon, such as the Five Pillars. However beyond that, it is left for the believer to interpret and decide. This loose approach to Islam allows Muslims to practice the faith in the way they see fit, but it also emboldens nefarious characters to interpret the religion in a way that justifies violence. The Home Secretary of the UK, Suella Braverman quite clearly recognises this reality and has therefore renewed her focus on Islamist extremism.

Several Hindus in the UK gathered in front of the *Guardian* News office in London to protest against the media house's "misleading and biased coverage" of the Leicester violence. The protestors claimed that the Guardian has projected the Hindu community in a bad light

> THE HINDU VICTIMS OF ISLAMIST EXTREMISM WERE LET DOWN BY THE MEDIA BECAUSE THERE IS CURRENTLY A BELIEF THAT USING TERMS SUCH AS ISLAMISM AND JIHADISM INCREASES ISLAMOPHOBIC SENTIMENTS. BUT THE TERMS ARE ACCURATE TO DESCRIBE AND CAPTURE FULLY THE PERPETRATORS THAT INTERPRET ISLAM IN A WAY THAT JUSTIFIES VIOLENCE

Naming the Islamist agitators in the Leicester riots is not rooted exclusively in the belief that it ignored their role, but rather, because it also prioritised imagined victims over the truth. The Hindu victims of Islamist extremism were let down by the media because there is currently a belief that using terms such as Islamism and Jihadism increases Islamophobic sentiments. But the terms are accurate to describe and capture fully the perpetrators who interpret Islam in a way that justifies violence. The terms are not used, nor can it be correct to assume that using them would demonise the diverse Muslim community in the UK. If this reluctance to use these terms continue, then the primary victims will be ignored in favour of the imaginary ones. This would be a bizarre way for the media and law enforcement to operate. ■

ANALYSIS

ABHISHEK DUBEY

Channel Advisor (DD-Sports)

BHARAT'S ROMANCE WITH MESSI

BHARAT'S SUPPORT FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN FOOTBALL TEAMS MIRRORS A CIVILISATIONAL DESIRE TO RALLY AROUND THE OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES–THOSE WHO FIGHT THE ERSTWHILE COLONISERS IN THE SPORTING ARENA. THE RECENT FOOTBALL–FEVER IN A CRICKET–CRAZY COUNTRY IS A CLEAR INDICATION BHARAT EAGERLY AWAITS ITS VERY OWN MESSI

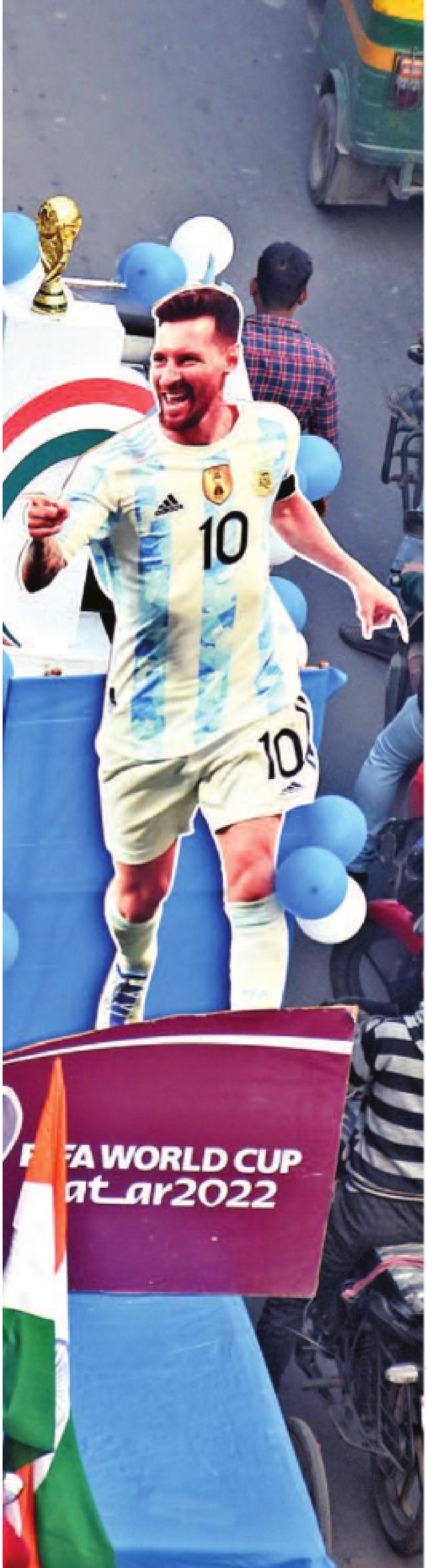
Why is football called a beautiful game? What is the beauty of this beautiful game? What makes the most popular sports on the planet so popular? If these questions are asked anymore, one needs to rewind to the 130 minutes of the final game of the FIFA World Cup 2022 between Argentina and France, frame by frame. Even the best sports writers who have breathed on this beautiful planet will fall short of words for what many have already called the best of the FIFA World Cup finals ever. For those little more than two hours, the entire world was divided into two halves. One half was praying for one of the greatest, if not the greatest ever, football players to have ever walked on the globe, Lionel Messi and his team Argentina. Messi had already announced that this is going to be his last world cup and his fans had only one question. Will the greatest ever fade into the sunset without holding the ultimate trophy in the sports? The other half was banking on the sheer magic of the next in the pantheon of the greats of the game, Kylian Mbappe, to steer his country France to the second consecutive world cup victory.

The two halves were till the last few minutes on the edge of their seats. Most of them have not been to Argentina or France even once in their lives. In all probability, they will neither be able to meet Messi

Fans of Argentina's football team celebrating the team's victory in the final match against France in the FIFA World Cup 2022, in Kolkata on December 18, 2022

nor Mbappe, in bone or flesh, ever in their lives. But they were shouting, crying, laughing, praying and dancing, doing it all in those 130 minutes. And this is what the good game of football does to most of us. The see-saw battle, the ups and the downs and the heartaches and jubilations continued till the players, and the fans were not emotionally drained and completely exhausted. Eventually, one team had to win and the other loose. And it was at this moment when the scriptwriter of the best possible script interfered for the last time. Lionel Messi got the World Cup which he so desperately wanted. Argentina won their third title in the history of the game. And a fresh generation of football fans was added to the fan base of the great sport. This generation could now proudly say that they witnessed the greatness of Lionel Messi and the emergence of another great Mbappe. And, like this, the romance with the beautiful game continues. The tremors of this mesmerising action was felt in India as well. While most of us in India are aware of the country's love for football, the world has started noticing and writing about the Indians with the sport and the greats of the game.

The Guardian did a story with the title, 'Our team will win, how many Indians started supporting Argentina'. The New York Times did an article on this with the title-'In India, fiercely Loyal Soccer Fans (of Brazil and Argentina). BBC News did a story on this aspect with the title-'How Football fever is gripping the cricket crazy India'. The title of the Al jazeera story on the subject read:-'Why Indians love World Cup Football even without India in it?' More than the titles and the case studies in these stories, what needs to be examined is some of the narratives and the spin being given in them. For instance, one spin given for India's obsession with Argentina and Brazil is the leftist leaning and connection in the states of Kerala and Bengal. If we delve deeper into the country's sporting ecosystem, nothing can be further from this truth.



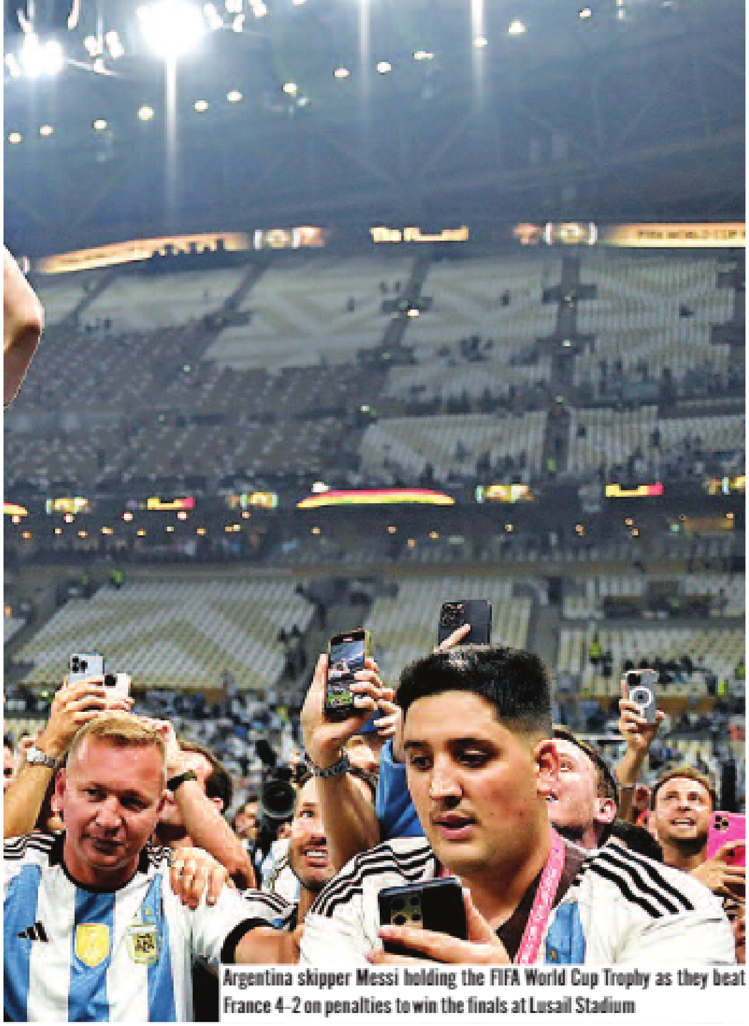
Supporters of Argentina carrying a cutout of Lionel Messi while celebrating the Fifa World Cup 2022 victory against France in Kolkata

In popular perception, India is a cricket-mad country. The country has the best cricket league in the world and is the sport's economic powerhouse. India made a solid beginning in hockey, but it was followed by a drastic and sudden fall in the curve. Off late, the country is making serious attempts to reclaim some of its past glory. India has a long distance to cover to be a substantive force in multi-sporting events like the Olympics and the Asian Games. Lately, it has started taking decisive baby steps and even aims to host the Olympics in 2036. India has a long history of soccer futility, having never qualified for the FIFA World Cup.

Back in 1950, the country had, what has been described by many, as the golden generation of players. In the 1948 Olympics, India fought hard against France and lost 1-2. In the build-up to the 1950 World Cup in Brazil, India was placed in the qualifying groups with the Philippines and Burma. Most Asian countries were poorer back then, and it was expensive for them to travel all the way to South American countries to participate in the FIFA World Cup. India, thus qualified for the World Cup by default. But then, India decided against sending their team to Brazil. What was the reason behind this? All India Football Federation till date don't have the answer which could convince us. Whereas some said that Indian players wanted to play barefoot, which was not agreeable to the world body, others say that the federation could not afford to send their players to Brazil back then. Whatever was the reason behind this, it was a case of mixed opportunity. From then to now, the country is still waiting for another such opportunity. In fact, it was only from the 1986 World Cup that India started to compete in the world cup qualification rounds. Amidst the backdrop, the invisible Indian fan of popular sports has always been there. What is the history of the origin of the fan base?

From Malabar in Kerala to Goa and Bengal, if decoded the football strip of India, the fan base primarily originated around the teams of the oppressed against the oppressor. The oppressor were the colonial masters whom the local population fancied and then started loving to defeat. In a way, football became the medium for them to vent out their pent-up anger. This fan base would have backed the golden generation of Indian players who were on the take-off stage. Unfortunately, Indian football could not take off after the 1950s, and there was a huge void for this fan base. It was then, this Indian fan base started backing Brazil, their greats and their brand of football. The fact that Brazil started dominating the game defeating India's erstwhile colonial masters like Great Britain, France and Portugal, further consolidated the emotional bond between the Indian fan base and Brazil team. It all started with their love for Pele, Garrincha, Didi and Vava when Brazil won the World Cup in 1958, which was the first of their five titles.

Back then, Indians had no access to television, and the vivid descriptions of their eye-catching football in newspapers the next day would send the football fans into an imaginary world. It continued for the next two world cups in 1962 and 1970. Novy Kapadia, India's one of the most prolific football writers and commentators, often talked about how the Indians used to drool about the 1982 Brazil team. Though this team failed to win the trophy, it won their hearts with its brand of attacking football. After this, in the 1986 World Cup, another Latin American country and a fierce rival of Brazil, Argentina, started occupying space in Indian hearts. By 1986, people had television sets even in the country's far-flung areas. When they saw Maradona's talent and the magic of his left foot visually and in real-time, half of India's Brazilian fan base switched their loyalties to the blue and white stripes. After this, the romance of the die-hard Indian football fans with Brazil and Argentina continues till date. It has nothing to do with Communist history, as argued by some. Before India's emergence as the cricket power in 1983, the majority of the fan base loved the West Indies team, their greats and their brand of attacking and fearless cricket. Was this also because of the Left



Argentina skipper Messi holding the FIFA World Cup Trophy as they beat France 4-2 on penalties to win the finals at Lusail Stadium

INDIANS' LOVE FOR PELE, MARADONA AND NOW MESSI HIGHLIGHTS ANOTHER MAJOR ETHOS OF THE GREATNESS OF THE SOCIETY AND THE COUNTRY. THE BASE OF INDIAN SOCIETY IS THE INCLUSIVE VALUES OF HINDUTVA. DESPITE HAVING MANY GODS AND DEITIES, FOLLOWERS COEXIST PEACEFULLY. INDIAN HISTORY IS REPLETE WITH THE ADMIRATION AND ADAPTATION OF WHAT IS BEST IN THE WORLD AND WHICH MIRRORS THE VALUES OF THE HINDU INDIAN SOCIETY. IN MESSI, INDIANS SEE A GLOBAL CITIZEN WHO IS A FIERCE NATIONALIST

connection? It was again the case of the oppressed so handsomely defeating those who ruled India once i.e. England. As has happened in the game of cricket, the silent Indian fan base will keep on rooting for Brazil and Argentina till India doesn't become a force in world football. This silent fan base is waiting for that one opportunity when India participates in the World Cup. After the 1990s, the silent Indian football fan base has further expanded.

Firstly, more than 65 per cent of the Indian population is below 35 years of age. The millennials in the country are increasingly watching and following the English Premier League and other important football leagues of the world. The gap between them and the generation that the colonial masters oppressed has increased. So, we find this newly emerging group amongst the Indian fan base supporting teams like France, Spain, England and their players. Secondly, the Indian diaspora has become a formidable and dominant force in countries like England, France, Germany and Spain, amongst others. Also, Indian students are studying in these countries' academic and other institutions. They are also increasingly becoming supporters of teams other than Brazil and Argentina. In nutshell, while the core of the Indian fan base still comprises mostly Brazil and Argentina, other fans who support European teams are being added.

Meanwhile, Indians' love for Pele, Maradona and now Messi highlights another major ethos of the greatness of the society and the country. The base of Indian society is the inclusive values of Hindutva. Hindu religion worships hundreds of gods and deities over the centuries and so is adaptive and dynamic. Despite having many gods and deities, followers coexist peacefully. Indian history is replete with the admiration and adaptation of what is best in the world and which mirrors the values of the Hindu Indian Society. In Messi, Indians see a global citizen who is a fierce nationalist.

Messi's ancestors were originally based from Ancona in Italy and they emigrated to Argentina in 1883. Lionel Messi was born in Rosario in Argentina on June 24, 1987. In Spain, since the age of 13 years, Messi has had dual nationality, and he qualified to play for Spain. In 2004, he was asked to play for the Spanish U20 side. However, he turned down the opportunity and turned out a year later, leading Argentina to victory in the FIFA Youth Championship. In one of the famous interviews, Messi says:-'I would have never played for Spain. I am Argentinian and no one and nothing can change what I feel for the Argentinian colours. Before December 2022, he had all the titles, accolades and money, but he was not satisfied. Messi wanted to win the World Cup for his country. Not surprisingly, the visuals of Messi kissing the world cup trophy, his mother coming, holding him tight and hugging him with tears in their eyes and Messi savouring the moment with his wife and three children has got etched in their memories forever. Meanwhile, the search of the silent Indian fans for their own Messi continues. ■

“FARMERS SHOULD GET COST-BASED PROFITABLE PRICE FOR THEIR PRODUCE”

Bhartiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) organised ‘Kisan Garjana Rally’ on December 19, 2022, at Ramlila Ground in New Delhi for various demands from the Union Government. In this background, Organiser Assistant Editor Ravi Mishra spoke to BKS General Secretary Mohini Mohan Mishra, who said that the Government should consider giving reasonable prices to farmers on the basis of their total cost for the crops. He said that BKS appreciate the Government's decision, which brought the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme in 2018-19. However, the input cost of cultivation has also increased in the last 3-4 years. Therefore, there should be an increase in PM Kisan Samman Nidhi too. Excerpts:

- **Why is Bharatiya Kisan Sangh protesting, and what are the demands?**

Bharatiya Kisan Sangh is India's largest farmers' organisation. `On December 19, 2022, we protested in Delhi. Our protest was for four demands. First, farmers are not getting their prices at par with the cost of farming, which has increased over the years. These were the farmers, who fed the country during the period of Covid crisis without earning any profit. Therefore, the government should consider extending reasonable prices to farmers on the basis of their input costs.

Secondly, we appreciated the government's decision, that brought the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme in 2018-19. However, the input cost of cultivation has also increased in the last 3-4 years. Therefore, we demand an increase in Kisan Samman Nidhi too. Then only it would be beneficial to the farmers.

Thirdly, we want the government to exempt Farmers from the 18 per cent GST applied on fertilisers, tractors and small technologies used in farming. It is because farmers don't get input credit. Fourth, the environment ministry recently gave permission for Genetically Modified (GM) Mustard, which is very dangerous. We have deliberated on this issue with the government. Till the government doesn't have any scientific data, permission should not be given. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) also accepted that they didn't have any scientific data regarding GM mustard; they are still collecting it from other countries. The fact is that since we don't have conclusive proof, why should permission be

A view of BKS protest in Ramlila Ground, New Delhi

given? This is really dangerous. GM crops cause cancer and are also against natural farming and biodiversity. Therefore, permission given for GM crops should be withdrawn.

- **You appreciated PM Kisan Samman Yojana. It means the Narendra Modi government is serious about farmers' issues.**

Of course, this government understands the problems of farmers and also talks to them. However, the government will have to think about the proper implementation of its decisions on the ground. Yes, we appreciate PM Kisan Yojana. But, there must be an increase in instalments amount.

- **Are you also demanding an increase in MSP?**

No, since the beginning, we have been against the concept of MSP. If we are buying things based on MRP, why sell based on MSP? We need a cost-based profitable price. MSP is based on support, which is meaningless; we don't endorse this. MSP was brought when we needed grain; the government asked farmers to cultivate basic and necessary crops, which it supported through MSP. Today, the situation is different as there is no food grain crisis in the country. Therefore, the concept of MSP doesn't apply today. Hence we are demanding a profitable price.

- **Various farmers' unions have also been protesting on many issues for the last three years. How is the BKS' protest different from theirs?**

The protests by other organisations, which you are talking about, were protests by a few farmers from Punjab, Haryana and western UP. It was a political protest for political gains. Even violence was also resorted to during those protests. They were protesting against the three farm laws. We were not in favour of repealing the farm laws as they were beneficial for farmers. Unfortunately, the government had to repeal those due to their pressure.

We had done a detailed survey in twenty thousand villages and asked the government to implement it after three amendments. First, all the traders, small or big, should be registered in a government portal so that a farmer could be sure about their authenticity. Second, all the traders should come with bank guarantees—with an assurance that if they flew without payment, then banks can pay the farmers. And the third is dispute settlement. Alongside the provisions of sub collector and collector, separate farmers' court should be established at the block & district levels. These were demands by BKS, that the government had also agreed to. However, the government surrendered before violent protesters and took back these constructive laws.

- **Shrinking of land due to the partition of the family is one of the big reasons behind the farm crisis. What do you have to say about this?**

No, this is not true. The problem is about input costs and the marketing system of exploiting and putting illegal taxes during purchases and procurements. Farmers are sellers, and no sellers give taxes. So why should farmers pay? ■

Rahul Gandhi with controversial Christian pastor George Ponniah, who was arrested last year for hate speech

YATRA FOR CONNECTING 'BHARAT TODO FORCES'

ANALYSIS

ANSHUL PANDEY

Author and Columnist

AS RAHUL GANDHI COMPLETES HIS 100 DAYS OF BHARAT JODO YATRA, LET US LOOK AT HOW CONGRESS'S FLAGSHIP EVENT IS AN ATTEMPT TO DIVIDE INDIA AND A WASTE OF PUBLIC TIME AND MONEY

Bharat Jodo Yatra was started with the intention of uniting India, but it has turned out to be quite the opposite as it has become the focal point of *Bharat Todo* (Break-India). This yatra is a very ambitious project undertaken by the Congress party to re-establish Rahul Gandhi and revitalise the Congress, despite the fact that Rahul Gandhi has failed thoroughly and miserably all through. He was unable to keep his old Lok Sabha constituency citadel of Amethi in the Congress fold. Under Rahul Gandhi's leadership, Congress was not even able to get a post as leader of the Opposition. This mega show is just a political guise undertaken by the Gandhi clan to establish their supremacy over gullible people. Simply providing a name and an appealing slogan and then walking on foot under the pretext of bringing people together

> RAHUL GANDHI MET ANTI-DEVELOPMENT PEOPLE LIKE UDAY KUMAR, WHO OPPOSED THE KUDANKULAM NUCLEAR PLANT AND THE ANTI-STERLITE PROTESTS IN THOOTHUKUDI. HE WANTED TO PUT BREAKS ON PROJECTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE, AND RAHUL GANDHI WAS SHOWERING LOVE ON HIM

is an exercise in futility. People wonder, "Is our India truly fractured?" and "Has the need to mend it arisen?"

The yatra covering 12 states started on September 7, 2022 from Kanyakumari and will conclude next month in Srinagar. The estimated 3,500-kilometre distance will be covered in 150 days.

Now that Rahul Gandhi has completed his 100 days of Bharat Jodo Yatra, let us look at how Congress's flagship event of the year unfolded.

TAMIL NADU

Rahul Gandhi met anti-Hindu Christian Pastor George Ponnaiah at the start of his yatra from Kanyakumari. This pastor made a gibberish statement during a conversation with our so-called Janeyu-dhari. The video went viral, and shamelessly, Rahul Gandhi didn't even dare interrupt that pastor. In the video, a person is heard explaining in the background the connection between Jesus and God using different states of water. "It is like water, that is in three states: solid, liquid, and gaseous." He then proceeded to explain that Jesus Christ is both God and the Son of God. "So, Jesus Christ is a form of God?" inquired Rahul Gandhi. On this, Pastor George Ponnaiah interrupted Rahul Gandhi, rebuking him and saying that Jesus is the only real God, unlike Shakti. When will Rahul realise that Sanatan Dharma is eternal and not a man-made religion? The pastor's claim that Jesus is a real God and Shakti is not, demonstrates that he is not only a Hindu-hater but also an India hater. This foul-mouthed pastor insulted Bharat Mata in July last year by saying that Bharat Mata is dirty and can cause scabies. He was addressing a public meeting at Kanyakumari and was making fun of a BJP candidate for not wearing shoes. BJP candidate had removed shoes in respect of Mother Earth.

The pastor said, "But we wear shoes. Why? Because the impurities of Bharat Mata should not contaminate us. The Tamil Nadu Government has given us free footwear. This Bhu-Devi is dangerous, you could catch scabies from it," in fact, he didn't stop there but went on to issue to Hindu people. He claimed, "We are now the majority (in the Kanyakumari district)—from 42 per cent, we have crossed 62 percent. Soon we would be at 70 percent. You cannot stop us. I am saying this as a warning to my Hindu brothers."

Rahul Gandhi also met anti-development people like Uday Kumar, who opposed the Kudankulam nuclear plant and the anti-Sterlite protests in Thoothukudi. He wanted to put breaks on projects of national importance, and Rahul Gandhi was showering love on him! During his Tamil Nadu Yatra, Rahul Gandhi was found wearing a 41,257 INR Burberry T-shirt, and his mocking PM Modi for once wearing an expensive outfit is nothing less than double speak.

KERALA

Congress took a day off in Kerala during the Popular Front of India (PFI) 's call for a Kerala bandh. Although Congress denies it, we all know better. We all know how Congress supports anti-India and anti-Hindu folks. Most of those whom Rahul Gandhi met in Kerala were not Hindus. Congress party workers were allegedly caught asking for a donation of 2,000 rupees from a vegetable vendor named Anas as part of the Yatra fund in Kunnikode, near Kollam. When the vendor offered Rs 500 instead of Rs 2000, his shop was vandalised.

KARNATAKA

Rahul Gandhi met with and visited various religious sects in Karnataka, simply enacting an appeasement policy. In fact, BJP leader Lahar Singh Siroya said during the Karnataka leg of the yatra that Congress had links with Maoists and separatists, as was seen during Siddaramiah's regime that doled out funds to these Maoists. Also, Congress put up a photo of Rahul Gandhi on the flag of Karnataka state. Is he above our national identity and icons? This was a betrayal of the entire Kannada community around the world.

Rahul Gandhi was in Karnataka when the Marathi-Kannada issue arose in Belgavi. Not surprisingly, despite being in power in Maharashtra for decades, Congress could not resolve the Belgavi border issue! In fact, they enjoy this issue for political mileage and play divide and rule politics between Marathi and Kannada-speaking people. Tension mounted between Karnataka and Maharashtra. Trucks and buses were targetted, and number plates were blackened. Thanks to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's timely intervention, who mediated on this matter, the tension was diffused.

ANDHRA PRADESH AND TELANGANA

In the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana legs of the yatra, the party was left red-faced after losing the Munnigode assembly by-polls after its legislator Komati Reddy quit the Congress and his assembly seat to join the BJP. As the Congress Party's hopes were demolished as they lost the polls, it proved that this yatra had no impact on the party's dwindling electoral prospects.

MAHARASHTRA

The Maharashtra leg of the yatra was also marred with controversy. Firstly, it covered only the eastern and northern parts of Maharashtra, leaving out the larger part. Then there was the meeting with this lady named Medha Patkar, who is tagged as an "anti-development" activist, and the Narmada Bachao activist, who stalled and delayed the Sardar Sarovar project through her anti-development and anti-growth stand. This time, she devised the ruse of a tribal welfare stance. She is constantly harping on the tribals about how the scheme will aid business houses in usurping their land. But very few people know that an FIR was filed against Medha Patkar in Madhya Pradesh for misappropriating funds collected in the name of educating tribal children. She was misleading tribal people. Pritam Raj, an activist, had filed an FIR accusing Medha Patkar of stealing more than 13 crore rupees under the guise of funding educational opportunities for tribal children. Pritam also alleged that she had misappropriated funds since she did not have accounts for all of the donations collected for the education of the tribal poor between 2007 and 2022. Rahul Gandhi also met the sympathisers of the Tukde-Tukde gang, who support Sushant Singh.

The biggest blunder Rahul Gandhi committed was reviling and disparaging Veer Savarkar. Disrespecting Maharashtra's idol, and that too on its soil, is just not acceptable. This was when Aditya Thackeray joined Rahul Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Yatra. Shiv Sena was very aggressive on its pro-Savarkar line during the Balasaheb

Rahul Gandhi with urban naxal sympathiser Swara Bhasker

Thackery era; anyone who dared to criticise Savarkar was met with black flags or even had their cars attacked. But this time, the Thackeray family didn't even come out to refute Rahul Gandhi. If Balasaheb had been alive, he would have never allowed Rahul Gandhi to travel across Maharashtra without apologising.

It is worth noticing that Rahul Gandhi did not enter Gujarat as he was keen to buttress the prospects of the purportedly pro-Khalistan and anti-Hindu Aam Aadmi Party. During the Gujarat election, their star campaigners disrespected Hindu deities. Rajendra Pal Gautam, the ex-minister of AAP, was caught doing mass conversions of Hindus to other religions and vowed never to worship Hindu deities such as Ram, Durga, and others. Even the AAP Gujarat chief disrespected Hindu sentiments when he said, "Temples are the places where women are exploited." He even abused Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mother using words like *Neech*. Fortunately, Gujarat did not succumb to AAP-Congress propaganda.

MADHYA PRADESH

In Madhya Pradesh, the response to the yatra was lukewarm. There were consistent chants of Modi-Modi amidst the crowds, proving that Modi's magic was intact. A frustrated Congress leader, Raja Pateriya, said during the Bharat Jodo Yatra that Modi should be killed to save democracy and Dalits. Gandhi believed in non-violence, as we are constantly told, but Congress is just doing the opposite. Raja Pateriya is now sulking in jail. An FIR was registered against Raja Pateriya under sections 451, 504, 505, and 506 of the Indian Penal Code. Still, Rahul Gandhi did not condemn it. In fact, Congress is justifying that statement by ridiculing that it was a call to defeat Modi, not to kill him. Congress thinks that people do not know the actual meaning of "killing someone!" Rahul Gandhi also met the controversial actress Swara Bhaskar during the MP leg of the yatra. The actor is known to back the Tukde-Tukde gang, which advocates an anti-India stance.

RAJASTHAN

A rumoured "Clash of Titans" marred the Rajasthan leg of the Yatra. The forever warring Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot duo let some undercurrent seep into this yatra, though they tried to be civil to each other in public. A few days ago, Ashok Gehlot criticised Sachin Pilot for his open rebellion. During the Bharat Jodo Yatra, the rift started increasing between the two. The question remains: if Congress cannot unite its leaders, how can they think of uniting India? Raghuram Rajan, the former RBI governor, too, went to lend his support to this so-called yatra. This is the same person who advocated for introducing Islamic banking in compliance with Shariah.

During the Rajasthan leg of the yatra, Rahul spoke disparagingly about the Indian Army, saying, "*Humarey jawano ko waha peet rahe hai sach tha*." As per the official reports, the number of Chinese troops injured was much higher than ours, and only a few minor injuries were reported in the Indian camp. It is a pity that Rahul Gandhi is playing politics here too, instead of celebrating the valiant efforts of our forces.

This Bharat Jodo Yatra is just a scam to divide India. This unfruitful, useless, aimless yatra is a waste of public time and money. ■

Rahul Gandhi with Medha Patkar, leader of anti-Sardar Sarovar Dam project in Gujarat, during the much hyped Bharat Jodo Yatra

JOINING HANDS, CONNECTING THE DOLTS

CONGRESS WINNING HIMACHAL, WHERE RAHUL DIDN'T CANVASS OR LOSING GUJARAT WHERE HE CAMPAIGNED, CLEARLY PROVES RAHUL IS NOT WALKING FOR VOTES. HE GENUINELY WANTS TO BRING TOGETHER INDIA AND INDIANS. INDIANS LIKE NAXALITES, TUKDE TUKDE GANGS AND EVEN THOSE WHO HATE BHARAT MATA

SATIRE

Dr GOVIND RAJ SHENOY

Columnist and writes mostly on Politics, Cricket and Cinema

Rahul Gandhi is a visionary beyond comprehension who thinks far ahead of his times. He thinks so ahead that Indians have consistently failed to understand him. There is a huge gap between his thoughts and people's understanding. Rahul began "Bharat Jodo Yatra" (BJY) with the Kanyakumari Pastor George Ponnaiah, who wears shoes to avoid contact with "filth of Bharat Mata".

As his "Yatra" progressed, the gap seems to have further widened. Many celebrities and activists have made "guest appearances" along the way. Hollywood actor John Cusack has supported the Yatra. Prominent activists, intellectuals, artists, writers and journalists have "joined hands" with Rahul. With allegedly dumb leaders like Stalin, Aaditya Thackeray and Supriya Sule joining Rahul, people have called it "Connecting the Dolts".

Actor Pooja Bhatt, daughter of Mahesh Bhatt (who promoted *26/11: RSS Ki Saazish* book) and sister of Rahul Bhatt (Indian handler of LeT terrorist David Headley) was a prominent face. "Narmada Bachao Andolan" activist Medha Patkar, who kept Gujarat parched for decades, was there too. Eminent economist and former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Raghuram Rajan came to join "Hand". Journalist Mrinal Pandey, activists Aruna Roy, Anjali Bharadwaj and author Devanooru Mahadeva joined Rahul during different stages. Bollywood actor Amol Palekar was magnanimous to hold hands, forgetting bitterness of his films *Vasanakand* and *Quest* being banned by Rahul's party in the past. Poonam Kaur, Rashmi Desai, Sushant Singh, Mona Ambegaonkar, Riya Sen, Akanksha Puri and Nagma too joined hands with Rahul.

Right wingers have accused Rahul of colluding with Urban Naxals, anti-India forces in general and anti-Hindu forces in particular. They are pointing fingers at former CPI leader and present Congress leader Kanhaiyya Kumar, who attained notoriety as part of "Tukde Tukde" gangs of JNU. Haters have dubbed it "Bharat Todo Yaatra" or "Break India Yatra". Then there is another JNU star Swara Bhasker, who claims to have lost work opportunities in Bollywood for speaking out against the Modi Government. Truth is, Rahul is simply trying to provide jobs to people rendered jobless by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This Yatra is not meant to shore up his popularity or to boost electoral fortunes of Congress. Veteran Congress leader Digvijaya Singh asked the media to dissociate BJY from electoral results. Congress winning Himachal, where Rahul didn't canvass or losing Gujarat where he campaigned, clearly proves Rahul is not walking for votes. He genuinely wants to bring together India and Indians. Indians like Naxalites, Tukde Tukde gangs and even those who hate Bharat Mata. That truly is representative of Nehruvian egalitarianism. No wonder a lot of young and older women are seen holding hands of Rahul, hugging him and even crying on his broad shoulders. Like great grandfather, like great grandson.

Rahul also has given a befitting reply to the critics, who said he is always hobnobbing with anti-Hindu forces. As the Yatra has progressed, he has become more and more Hindu. Growing an unkempt beard, shunning Sun-screen, running with kids and carrying symbols of Hinduism all over his persona, Rahul has rebranded himself as a new Hindutva icon different from Veer Savarkar brand of Hindutva. He has "Modi-fied" his looks. Some people believe, by the time BJY reaches Kashmir, he may become an ascetic or even a Naga Sadhu and head straight towards the Himalayas. That must be a scary thought for BJP leadership.

Rahul has snatched Ram from RSS and BJP and redefined Ram like nobody else before him. He pointed out, BJP people always say, "Jai Sri Ram" and not "Jai Siya Ram", because they have no respect for women. "Why are they taking Siya out of Ram?" asked Rahul and then reminded us of the second slogan "Hey Ram!". Gandhiji said, "Hey Ram, Hey Ram, Hey Ram" when he was shot by Godse. Uninformed Godse claimed, "Gandhi just said Ah and fell down." Quite obviously Rahul knows better. His great grandfather Nehru told us, Gandhiji's last words were "Hey Ram!" Only Rahul knows Gandhiji said "Hey Ram " not once, but thrice. That is the connect Rahul has with time, past and future.

VARIOUS ALLEGATIONS HAVE NOT DETERRED RAHUL. ALLEGATIONS LIKE "PAKISTAN ZINDABAD" SLOGANS BEING SHOUTED DURING HIS YATRA. HE IS CONFIDENT THAT "NEUTRAL" FACT CHECKERS, WIKIPEDIA AND ACTOR PRAKASH RAJ WILL PROVE THEM FAKE. "IF THE CONSTITUTION IS TO BE SAVED, GET READY TO KILL MODI", SAID MADHYA PRADESH CONGRESS LEADER RAJA PATERIA. WITHOUT DOUBT, COURTS AND CONGRESS WILL PROTECT HIS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Various allegations have not deterred Rahul. Allegations like "Pakistan Zindabad" slogans are are being shouted during his Yatra. He's confident that "Neutral" fact checkers, Wikipedia and actor Prakash Raj will prove them fake. After all, they have successfully certified his statement "Modi cannot protect Nirmala Sitaraman but begs her to save him" as not sexist. "If the Constitution is to be saved, get ready to kill Modi", said Madhya Pradesh Congress leader Raja Pateria. Without doubt, Courts and Congress will protect his freedom of expression.

Rahul also has addressed the allegations that he keeps going on foreign holidays way too often. He hasn't gone abroad in three months since the September 7 launch of BJY. Not even during Diwali break. Reportedly, this is the longest he has stayed in India in his lifetime. That proves how sincere he is to the cause. Detractors are waiting for Christmas - New Year break now. Will Rahul visit his Naani in Italy? Rahul baiters are ready with the barb *"Bharat Chhodo Yatra"* or "Leave India Yatra". In the meantime, every time the Indian Parliament is in session, the Chinese army has made it a ritual to create skirmishes at Galwan or Tawang. Questions are being asked, "Is this part of the MoU between Congress and the Chinese Communist Party?" Wicked insinuations questioning commitment of Congress and Rahul towards India. Rahul is not a coward to skirt these questions. India awaits Rahul to come out with Taapsee Pannu–level of befitting reply. ■

NEW NARRATIVE OF 'ASHTA LAKSHMI'

THE EIGHT STATES OF NORTHEAST GENERALLY USED TO BE IN NEWS FOR NEGATIVE THINGS LIKE BLOCKED AND VIOLENCE HAS BECOME A TALKING POINT OF CULTURE, CONNECTIVITY AND ALL AROUND DEVELOPMENT

■ DIBYA KAMAL BORDOLOI

After many decades, the Northeastern region of India has seen a year of peace and progress. For several decades, the region has witnessed prolonged violence's due to foreign sponsored insurgency. Things have taken a turn for betterment in the last few years ever since the BJP led union government has adopted the 'Peace through development' module. Large scale development models initiated by the government have brought back many insurgency groups to the mainstream in the region. Thousands of insurgents have laid down their arms in the last couple of years resulting in a peaceful atmosphere in the region.

Union Home minister Amit Shah recently said in Shillong that within eight years, incidents of insurgency had seen a decline of 74% in Northeast India and that the Government is taking initiatives to repeal Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA)

Speaking in the North Eastern Council's Golden jubilee celebration in Shillong on 18th December, 2022, Shah said, "Earlier Northeast India was known for shutdowns, strikes, bomb blasts & firing. In eight years, incidents of insurgency have seen a decline of 74%. Northeast that exists today has ameliorated from what it was eight years ago".

Home Minister Shah opined that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Northeast has gone ahead on the path of development. Peace has prevailed in the northeast. "If you compare the northeast states that prevailed eight years ago and the northeast that exists today, you will find that after Narendra Modi became the PM for the first time the northeast is treading on the path to progress, truce, and development simultaneously," he said.

It needs to be emphasised that the attacks on security personnel in the region by insurgency groups have also curtailed by 60 percent. Most importantly, civilian deaths on insurgency related incidents have reduced by 89 percent in the last couple of years. Around 8,000 youths have laid down their arms and chosen to join the mainstream in the entire North East. This is a major achievement of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi led union government to establish permanent peace in the region. Home Minister Amit Shah added "Earlier, a lot of demands were made to repeal the Arm Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA). Now, nobody needs to make such demands, rather the Government is taking initiatives to repeal AFSPA".

The central government has withdrawn AFSPA from 60 percent areas of Assam. In Manipur in six districts AFSPA's operation is limited to 15 Police stations. In Arunachal Pradesh, only one district remains covered in AFSPA. In Nagaland, it has been lifted from 7 districts & in Tripura & Meghalaya, AFSPA completely lifted."

It should be mentioned that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has attached top priority to the development of the North East region and he has

THE STAT

FOR S

NORTHEAST

AROUND 8,000 YOUTHS HAVE LAID DOWN THEIR ARMS AND CHOSEN TO JOIN THE MAINSTREAM IN THE ENTIRE NORTHEAST

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma sign pact to end border dispute

himself visited the region over 50 times in the past 8 years. HM Amit Shah stated, "For the Modi government the Northeast region is a priority and in over 8 years PM Modi has visited the northeast over 50 times. Now budget allocations and implementations in Northeast are top most priority. The infra development of the region had taken a new shape under". After PM Modi came to power, with several changes, the budget has reached the villages and grassroots today and can be seen converting into actual work. This is a major achievement," HM Shah said, "We have connected all the state capitals of Northeast by road, rail and Air connectivity. Efforts are underway to resolve interstate border disputes between Assam-Meghalaya and Assam and Arunachal Pradesh."

MAJOR PEACE AGREEMENTS IN NORTHEAST

NLFT Tripura Agreement: The agreement was signed on 10th August 2019 in the presence of the Home Minister. Immediately thereafter 88 cadres surrendered with 44 weapons in the organised Surrender Ceremony held on 13.08.2019. As per the MoU, for the overall development of the tribes of Tripura, the Government of Tripura will be provided with a Special Economic Development Package (SEDP) of Rs. 100 crores by the Government of India over a period of five years. Bru agreement: A historic agreement was signed in the presence of the Home Minister on 16.01.2020 by the Government of India, Government of Tripura, and Government of Mizoram along with representatives of Bru migrants for the permanent settlement of 6959 Bru families (37,136 persons) in Tripura with a financial package of approx Rs. 661 crore.

Bodo Peace Accord: In the presence of Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 27.01.2020 by the Government of India, the Government of Assam, and representatives of Bodo groups to resolve the long-pending Bodo issue. After the agreement, 1615 cadres of NDFB groups surrendered their weapons on 30.01.2020. The NDFB groups were dissolved on 09-10th March 2020.

Karbi Anglong Agreement: To end the decades-old crisis in the Karbi Anglong region of Assam, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 04.09.2021 in the presence of the Home Minister among the Government of India, the Government of Assam and representatives of Karbi groups (KLNLF, PDCK, UPLA, KPLT). As a result of this historic agreement, more than 1000 armed cadres renounced violence and joined the mainstream of society.

'ACT FAST AND 'ACT FIRST FOR NORTHEAST'

PM Modi who also graced the golden jubilee meet of the North Eastern Council in Shillong, discussed about the Northeast to be seen in the ensuing 50 years. In fact, PM Modi has outlined the road map for North eastern for the coming 25 years. Addressing a public rally in Shillong, Prime Minister Modi emphasised on his government's priority on infrastructure building in the region. He said, the government should work on 8 foundation pillars for its development, viz. Peace, Power, Tourism, 5G connectivity, Culture, Natural farming, Sports, Potential.

The Prime Minister said that the Northeast is our gateway to South -East Asia and can become a centre for development of the entire region. And to realise this potential of the region, work is going on the projects like Indian-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and Agartala-Akhaura rail project. Prime Minister Modi highlighted that the government has gone beyond the conversion of the

The Bogibeel Bridge, Dibrugar, Assam

'Look East' policy to 'Act East', and now its policy is 'Act Fast for Northeast' and 'Act First for Northeast.'

FLYING NORTHEAST

Connectivity boost is one of the core areas of emphasis by the central government in the region. Nearly 7 lakh crores rupees have been pumped by the central government in North East in the last 8 years to boost infrastructure which encompasses rail, road, and air and internet connectivity. Talking about boosting connectivity in the region, the Prime Minister said that iconic bridge projects which had been pending for several decades had now been completed. In the last 8 years, the number of airports in the region has jumped from 9 to 16, and the number of flights have increased from about 900 before 2014 to around 1900. Many North eastern states have come to Railway map for the first time and efforts are underway to expand the waterways also. The length of national highways has increased by 50% since 2014 in the region." After the launch of the PM-DevINE scheme, the infrastructure projects in the Northeast have gained more momentum. The government is also working on improving digital connectivity in the Northeast by increasing the optical fibre network. Talking about development of Atma Nirbhar 5G infrastructure, PM Modi said that 5G would help further development of startup ecosystem, service sector among others in the region. He said that his government was committed to making the Northeast not only a centre of economic growth, but also of cultural growth.

Under the Krishi UDAN scheme of the central government, farmers of the region are able to send their products across the country and different parts of the world as well. Recently oranges produced in Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya are being exported to the Middle East. Vegetable, aromatic rice from Assam, pineapple from Mizoram and Black Rice from Manipur are being exported to foreign nations under the Krishi UDAN scheme.

As Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said, "Today, we are further establishing seamless connectivity across Northeast India by connecting four cities with one flight. This underlines the due importance given to the Northeast by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Under the UDAN scheme, we have connected cities which had no mention on the aviation map of the country. We have already started 60 airports, and 387 routes, out of which 100 routes are awarded in the Northeast alone, and 50 are already operational. Moreover, in 2014, only 6 airports were operational in the Northeast, now we have grown to 16 airports in a short span of 8 years. Therefore, this further highlights the due importance of the Northeastern states. Besides, under the KRISHI UDAN Yojna, we have identified 16 airports to enhance the export opportunities of the region establishing dual benefits of enhancement of cargo movements and exports."

Today, under the prime minister's directives, additional airports in Lilabari, Tezpur and Rupsi in Assam, Tezu, Pasighat, Hollongi (Donyi Polo), in Arunachal Pradesh, and Pakyong, in Sikkim, Dimapur in Nagaland and the Umroi airport in Meghalaya are being operationalized for the service of the people of the region. ■

TOUGH ON CONVERSION

MANOHAR LAL LED-HARYANA GOVERNMENT HAS NOTIFIED RULES TO IMPLEMENT ITS LAW AGAINST RELIGIOUS CONVERSION THROUGH FORCE, UNDUE INFLUENCE OR ALLUREMENT UNDER WHICH DISTRICT MAGISTRATES WILL HAVE TO PUBLISH A PUBLIC NOTICE AND INVITE OBJECTIONS, IF ANY, TO AN INTENDED CONVERSION

■ YATHARTH SIKKA

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on December 20 said that the notification of the Haryana Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill 2022, which was passed during the last budget session, has now been issued by framing the rules of the Act.

"During the last budget session, the Haryana Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill 2022 was passed and it has now been notified. Under this Act, no one can convert anyone's religion by putting pressure, by pretending to marry, or by intimidating/threatening," Anil Vij said.

He said that a provision had also been made in this Act that if someone wanted to change their religion voluntarily, then an application could be given to the Deputy Commissioner of the concerned district. If the Deputy Commissioner is satisfied, then the application can be approved.

Upon verification, if the district magistrate finds that force or inducement has been used or is likely to be used in any conversion and that a conversion has taken place without notice, he may refer the case along with all material adduced during the course of the inquiry to the concerned police station for registration of a criminal case and its investigation.

According to the notified rules, any person intending to convert to another religion shall, prior to such conversion, give a declaration in Form 'A' to the district magistrate of the district in which he is permanently residing.

"In case the person intended to be converted is a minor, both of the parents or surviving parent, as the case may be, shall give a declaration in Form 'B'.

"Any religious priest and/or any person who intends to organise conversion under the Act shall give prior notice in Form C to the district magistrate of the district where such conversion is proposed to be organised," the rules state.

STOP
FORCEFULL
CONVERSION
According to anti-conversion law, it is the accused's responsibility to demonstrate that the conversion was not carried out through compulsion, force (Representative image)

While making a declaration before the district magistrate, such individuals will have to specify details like a reason for the conversion, how long they have been professing the religion which they have decided to renounce, whether they belong to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, occupation and monthly income.

Further, if the conversion is done by allurement, forcefully, coercion or fraudulent means, there is a provision for imprisonment of one to five years and a fine of not less than Rs 1 lakh. The law also delineates that if anyone is concealing his religion with an intention to marry shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than three years to ten years and shall be liable to pay a fine not less than Rs 3 lakh. Anyone conducting a mass conversion is punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than five years and may extend up to 10 years and shall also be liable to pay a fine not less than Rs 4 lakh, according to the law. "Recently, there has been a case of unlawful conversion in the Sonipat district and it can be registered under this Act. A punishment of 5 to 10 years can be imparted under this Act," the Haryana Minister said.

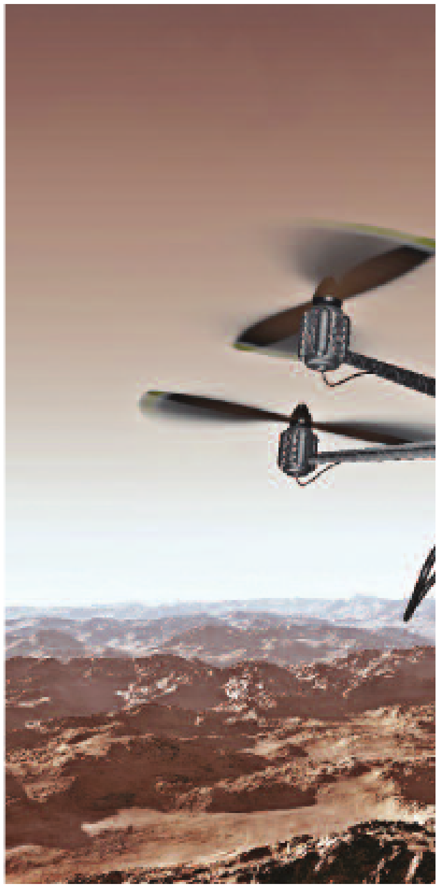
Several states such as Karnataka, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand also have anti-conversion laws. ■

COLUMN/ TECH RACE

GB REDDY

Hyderabad-Based Columnist and Strategic Analyst

DRONES AND WARFARE



THE GLOBAL RACE FOR ADVANCEMENT IN DRONE TECHNOLOGY—FROM ENTERTAINMENT AND SCIENCE TO MILITARY—IS NOT ONLY SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD, BUT HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BALANCE OF POWER AS WELL. GIVEN THIS SCENARIO, BHARAT NEEDS TO AUGMENT ITS DRONE INFRASTRUCTURE

The "Drone Age" dawned during the Vietnam War for reconnaissance in early 1970. During the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Israeli military deployed modified U.S. drones for surveillance and as decoys. Only around 2000 did the US weaponise-drones, adding Hellfire anti-tank missiles onto the Predator.

Most importantly, Unarmed Aircraft Systems (UASs) or UAVs and UACVs are cheap, easy to make, less escalatory than fighters, autonomous in future models and not involve risk of lives. UASs will likely have significant utility for both broad-based competition and warfare in the future. UASs combine both platforms and systems capable of collecting intelligence over vast geographic areas, striking targets if necessary, and operating in a contested environment. They can operate in close, short and mid-range and as endurance systems. Besides, Drones are easy to weaponise. Even commercial drones can carry a 1,000-pound payload. Besides, even low-powered drones can deliver biological weapons or nuclear materials. These can hover, that allows them to stay on target, that initially made drones so essential for reconnaissance in warfare and for tracking the enemy. In 2017, a diesel-powered drone, the Vanilla Aircraft VA001, conducted a five-day continuous flight—landing with three days of fuel left to spare.

The U.K. conducted 398 drone strikes in Iraq and Syria between 2014 and 2019. Non-State actors are also employing drones. In Syria and Iraq, ISIS launched 60 to 100 drone attacks every month in 2017. In 2018, Syrian rebels fighting Russian forces strapped explosives to drones constructed from little more than a small engine, packing tape, plywood, and plastic. Over the first nine months of 2021, Houthi rebels launched 33 missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia. As per public domain reports, 102 countries have active military drone programs.

UASs or UAVs and UACVs have played an important role in warfare over the past two decades - effectively employed in Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020 and the Ukraine war in 2022 - including terrorism and counterterrorism operations. For example, Azerbaijan

The uses of drones are diverse: capture high-quality photographs and video, but they can also map terrain, monitor crops, forecast weather, and assist with search-and-rescue operations

effectively utilised UASs as part of a combined arms approach—including with fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, loitering munitions, guided missiles, and artillery—to reverse Armenia's three decades of control over large swaths of Nagorno-Karabakh. Also, in Ukraine, both Russia and Ukraine have employed UASs as part of combined arms warfare, a notable shift from them in tracking and targeting terrorists in the past two decades, to improve battlefield awareness without risking loss of life whilst conducting offensive and defensive operations.

In futuristic battlefield scenarios, drones have a particularly destructive potential when enabled with artificial intelligence (AI). Most salient is the danger from drone swarms: massive numbers of drones communicating and coordinating with one another using AI to destroy a pre-programmed target. Drone swarms should be thought of as an emerging arms control challenge, as these are exceedingly difficult to counter or control. In 2020, China showed a Hummer-like vehicle which could launch a swarm of 48 drones, each carrying a high-explosive warhead.

To sum it up, UASs are heralding a "revolution in military affairs," that will fundamentally reshape military doctrine, organization, force structure, operations, and tactics. In the future, UASs will likely play a critical role conducting several types of missions as part of combined arms warfare, including:

- Domain awareness and early warning;
- Battlefield awareness;
- Targeting for stand-off attacks;
- Strike;
- Electronic warfare
- Information operations

The value of the global drone market is nearly $30 billion. As of 2020, there were 1.4 million recreational drones and about 500,000 commercial drones registered in the United States. The uses are diverse: capture high-quality photographs and videos, but they can also map terrains, monitor crops, forecast weather, and assist with search-and-rescue operations. Perhaps most revolutionary is the potential effect drones could have on shipping, deliveries, and transportation.

Armed drones are proliferating rapidly, and drone warfare is thus likely to become even more prevalent in coming years. The US, Russia and China are in a race to be the next drone superpower, besides few other nations including Israel, Iram and Turkey.

China's stealth drones' missiles have surpassed and threaten the US. In late September 2022, the world received its first look into the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Squadron. The Chinese arsenal has showcased WL-2, GJ-2, WL-3, FH-901, WL-1E, WL-10A and FH-97A with dramatic effect, showing footage of targeting aerial platforms and ground vehicles.

China has over 1650 Drones of all types including: miniature, micro (MAVs), and unmanned combat air vehicles (UCAVs), unmanned blimps, and rotary-wing UAVs. Add to them, Unmanned airships/blimps, Unmanned cyclogyros, Unmanned helicopters, Unmanned coaxial helicopters, Unmanned multirotors, Unmanned tricopters, Unmanned quadcopters, Unmanned hexacopters, Unmanned octocopters, Unmanned ornithopters, Unmanned powered paragliders, V/STOL UAVs, Lift augmented ducted fan V/STOL UAVs etc.

Chinese companies are leaders in the global civilian drone industry. China is the second largest drone market in the world after the US. Chinese drone manufacturer DJI alone has 74 per cent of civilian-market share in 2018, with no other company accounting for more than 5 per cent, and with $11 billion forecast global sales in 2020.

Of course, the US has more than 11,000 UAS's in support of domestic training events and overseas

Harop is a loitering missile capable of seeking targets and destroying them with pin-point accuracy. It has proven to be an extremely useful surveillance tool along the mountainous Northern borders

contingency missions UAS systems - Drones - across all four Services, including the National Guard. These aircraft srange in size from the small RQ-11B Raven to the largest RQ/MQ-4 Global Hawk/Triton, which weighs more than 32,000 pounds.

The Russian military operates a fleet of about 500 drones. Russian products lag behind the systems of leading competitors. The Russian MoD has tested and placed orders for small drones such as the Eleron-3SV (Enics, Kazan), the Granat and the Takhion (Izhmash Unmanned Systems, Izhevsk), and the Korsar (United Instrument Manufacturing Corporation, Rostec, currently in testing).

Even Iran in October 2021 unveiled its new Kaman 22 (UAV), which seems to be modeled on the U.S.-made MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper, besides the Chinese CH-5 drone. It has provision for AAMs, ASM, ASCMs, hybrid cruise missiles, glide bombs, PGMs, laser targeting pods and X-Band Jammers. Also, has Shahed 129 and Shahed 149 Gaza that have comparable capabilities.

Finally, Pakistan developed Burraq in secrecy from 2009. It has been mostly influenced by the US Predator and the Chinese CH-3 UCAVs. Burraq has a range of 1000 km, its maximum speed is 215 km/h and a service ceiling is 24,606 ft. It carries two 'Barq' air-to-surface laser guided missiles which is single stage missile capable of destroying both stationeries, as well as, moving targets.

By contrast, currently the Indian armed forces have some 200+ Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) Searcher and Heron UAVs of Israeli origin and a few HAROP UAVs recently inducted by the IAF. The Indian Army initially obtained the Searcher Mark I in 1988, followed by the Searcher Mark II which could operate at an altitude ceiling of 15,000 ft and finally acquired the Heron that could operate at an altitude ceiling of 30,000ft. Searcher payload capacity is 150 lbs and operational ceiling is 20,000ft. However, with its abilities to stay aloft for up to 18 hours and carry a variety of sensors, it has rendered yeoman's service along the Western borders and Indian shores.

Heron, the larger of the two MALE UAVs is more versatile. With a take-off weight of 1,150 kg, it can carry a 250 kg payload of sensors, stay aloft up to 52 hours (depending on the chosen flight profile) and with operating ceiling of 32,000 ft, it has proven to be an extremely useful surveillance tool along the mountainous Northern borders. Harop is a loitering missile capable of seeking targets and destroying them with pin-point accuracy. Harop with 1000 km range and 6 hours endurance can be launched against land-based and sea-based targets. The UCAV detects strong pulses from targets such as missiles, radars and hits at the source. It is possible to launch the Harop from ground, sea and air. Most of the UAVs of the Indian armed forces were procured from IAI Malat, whose UAVs were in service with numerous countries.

Three variants of the Rustom UAV developed by the DRDO: Rustom-1: Tactical UAV with endurance of 12 hours; Rustom-H: Larger UAV with flight endurance of over 24 hours, higher range and service ceiling than Rustom-1; TAPAS-BH-201 (Rustom-2) - based on Rustom-H model. NISHANT was developed, but user cancelled its orders.

AURA is an autonomous stealthy UCAV being developed by the DRDO for the Indian Air Force. The UCAV will be capable of releasing missiles, bombs and precision-guided munitions. AURA UCAV is India's most ambitious unnamed aerial system which will have a blend wing body and will have stealth characters to make it effective Ground Strike platform. AURA weighing 15 tons will be powered by a single Ghatak turbofan engine which will allow the drone to cruise at Mach 1.2 at an altitude of 30,000 ft. The full-scale prototype is expected in 2025.

The DRDO's Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile (ITCM) project reportedly suffered another setback after its indigenously developed Manik turbofan engine - a 400-Kg thrust class Small Turbofan Engine for short operating life, developed by Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE), Bengaluru, failed to light up after launch during a test at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) on October 28, 2022.

To sum up, India is at least 5-10 years behind China, USA, Russia, Israel, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan besides others in the Drone Technology Race which is set to change the future wars are going to be fought in space and seas. More importantly, terrorist drone threats will only escalate. How to counter such threats is the real challenge which needs to be overcome earliest. ■

"BRITISH STARTED THE HISTORICAL DISTORTION; CONGRESS THROUGH COMMUNISTS PERPETUATED IT"

RIGHT FROM THE ARYAN INVASION THEORY TO HINDU TERROR, VARIOUS MYTHS ARE CREATED THROUGH HISTORICAL DISTORTION. HOW THE BRITISH CREATED MYTHS ARE PERPETUATED BY THE CONGRESS PARTY THROUGH COMMUNIST HISTORIANS WAS WIDELY REVIEWED AT THE BOOK LAUNCH

असत्यमेव Satyameva Jayate
Launch of Hindi, Gujarati and English Edition

Swami Paramatmanand Saraswati, Convener and Secretary General, Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, Swami Nirmalananda Natha, the head of the Natha Sampradaya, Eminent Historian Meenakshi Jain, Abhijit Joag, Author and Social Activist Shefali Vaidya and Anand Ranganathan at the book launch

■ **RAVI MISHRA**

A book titled *Asatyameva Jayate* authored by Abhijit Joag was launched on December 17, 2022, at the Constitution Club, Delhi in three languages Hindi, English and Gujarati. The book was launched by Swami Paramatmanand Saraswati, Convener and Secretary General, Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha and Swami Nirmalananda Natha, the head of the Natha Sampradaya. The launch was accompanied by a panel discussion which was moderated by Author and Social Activist Shefali Vaidya. Eminent Historian Meenakshi Jain, Author and Columnist, Anand Ranganathan and the author Abhijit Joag participated in the panel discussion.

Dr. Meenakshi Jain, while speaking in panel discussion said, "Distortion of Indian history had infact started in late 1960s when Indira Gandhi was in minority government and due to this she had taken support of Communist party and Muslim league. Then Communist asked for education ministry and resultantly Syed Nurul Hassan was installed as Education Minister. This was the time when Indian Council of Historical Research was founded and from there distortion of our history began.

Abhijit Joag said, "Distortion of real history was in fact started by the British which was continued in the pre and post-independence era by three sets of people: it was done by Muslim Scholars from Deoband and Aligarh School, that was articulated by Mohammad Habib, farther of Irafan Habib, who was also a communist. The other group to indulge in distortion was Congress itself and their History was drafted by M N Roy, who was in fact, a communist. He was in Congress for sometime. The third group were the Marxist historians who controlled the field of historiography under the Congress government in independent India, when Jawahar Lal Nehru was the Prime Minister of the Country. This became even more pronounced under Mrs Indira Gandhi.

Anand Ranganathan raised the issue of Hindu temples under government control and asked the government to hand over temples to the Hindus.

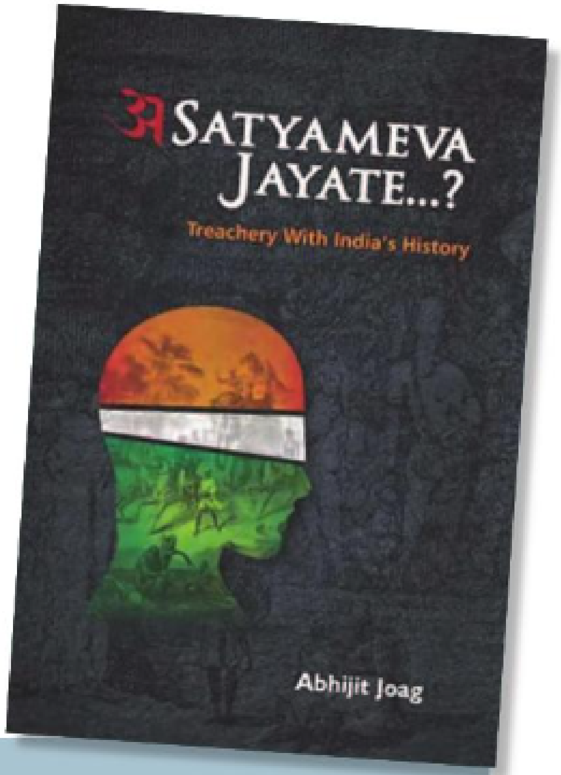
Swami Parmatmananda Sarswati ji, while addressing the gathering, said, "Most of the wars have taken place because of religions and the irony is that every religion claims to be the messenger of peace. In this context, there is a paradigm shift. Earlier wars used to take place primarily for the land. Now there are two types of wars. One is Economic war, that was never heard about earlier. While nowadays foreign policy is governed by commerce. And the second is cultural & religious war."

"Hinduism is not just a Way of life; it is a View of life; and together, both these virtues lead to the Vision of Truth. That is Hinduism," Swami Sri Parmatmanand Saraswat said, while talking on Hinduism. ■

TREACHERY WITH INDIA'S HISTORY

***ASATYAMEVA JAYATE* CRITICALLY ANALYSES THE THREE MAJOR STREAMS IN INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE—NON-VIOLENT MOVEMENT UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MAHATMA GANDHI, ACTIVITIES OF ARMED REVOLUTIONARIES, AND UPRISINGS IN THE INDIAN ARMY SERVING THE BRITISH—AND ESTABLISHES WITH SOLID EVIDENCE AS TO WHO DESERVES THE CREDIT FOR INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE**

DR SUDHANSHU GORE



Title: Asatyameva Jayate?
Author: Abhijit Joag,
Publisher: Bhishma Publications,
Pp 490, ₹ 599.00

India must probably be the only country in the world whose ancient, glorious history has been obfuscated and disillusioned in a fractured, misleading manner. Different powers have done this in different eras for their own different reasons. However since their interests overlapped with one an other, these misleading narratives have continued unabated for the last 200 years. Some wholly false and imaginary accounts without a shred of evidence have come to be established as 'history'. On the other hand, actual events that have hundreds of proofs are brazenly denied as "never having occurred".

Moreover, anyone calling out the lies and attempting to tell the truth is branded retrogressive or communal and is forced out of intellectual circles so that his her opinion is suppressed and never comes before the world. Undaunted by this intellectual oppression, some learned scholars have done meticulous research in order to place the true history of India before the world. History writing with the intention of misleading people has proved very harmful for the nation; many generations of Indians have grown up with an inferiority complex and a defeatist mentality. This is why the enquiry conducted by these scholars is priceless. *Asatyameva Jayate* is a book by Abhijit Joag which has been orchestrated with a view to apprising the readers of how India's history, right from the Vedic era through to the Independence Movement has been mis-represented.

The chapter on Aryan Invasion Theory elaborates how the British invented this theory to justify their imperial designs, how invasion was changed to migration and how the proponents of this theory completely ignore hundreds of evidences to establish that language and culture flowed from India to the West and not vice versa. The writer has put together comprehensive arguments based on Archaeology, Rigved, Saraswati River, Genetics etc. to conclusively debunk this theory.

We have been told that India's history, right from Mohammed Bin Quasim in the 8th Century to Ahmedshah Abdali in the 18th Century, is one of continuous defeats at the hands of invaders. The author rejects this by comparing India's response to Islamic Invasions with that of the other countries from Afghanistan to Spain.

After the death of Prophet Mohammed, Islamic warriors won a vast expanse of land, from Central Asia in the East to Spain and Portugal in the West, in just 125 years. After that, within just 250 years they imposed Islam and Arabic language in this entire area. Whereas in India they could neither establish their rule over the entire country nor wipe out Hindu religion and our languages even after 1000 years.

Because, our history is not the history of defeats but of continuous heroic resistance and feats.

'*Asatyameva Jayate?*' celebrates this struggle with examples of heroes whose names have been obliterated from our history.

The book elaborates how, the denial of the atrocities, iconoclasm and forced conversions perpetrated by the Arab and Turkish Islamic invaders in India have become a part of mainstream historiography. Calling this out is branded as bigoted and anti-secular. A lobby of Nehruvian intellectuals, Muslim Scholars and leftist historians are the torch bearers of this negationism. The author counters and exposes their fallacious narrative with concrete evidences.

The chapter on Emperor Ashoka and Badshah Akbar analyses that Non-violence and Secularism were the two pillars of Jawaharlal Nehru's policies and image building. Ashoka and Akbar were chosen as symbols of these two attributes and they were given disproportionate importance in India's history at the expense of other greats whose contribution was either completely ignored or restricted to only a passing reference. History tells us that for Ashoka and Akbar, Nonviolence and Secularism weren't uncompromising principles but merely politically convenient compromises.

> **THE CHAPTER ON ARYAN INVASION THEORY ELABORATES HOW THE BRITISH INVENTED THIS THEORY TO JUSTIFY THEIR IMPERIAL DESIGNS, HOW INVASION WAS CHANGED TO MIGRATION AND HOW THE PROPONENTS OF THIS THEORY COMPLETELY IGNORE HUNDREDS OF EVIDENCES TO ESTABLISH THAT LANGUAGE AND CULTURE FLOWED FROM INDIA TO THE WEST AND NOT VICE VERSA**

We have been made to believe that Sufis were great humanitarian saints who built bridges of love between Hindus and Muslims. The author establishes with a number of evidences that this is a big lie.

A very grim and gloomy picture has been created of the moral decadence of the Hindu religion at the time of the beginning of the British Raj. While it is undeniable that the regressive practices like Sati were despicable, we are not aware how their incidence in India was blown out of proportion by a lobby which wanted to pressurise East India Company to grant British Missionaries permission to start evangelical activities in India. The author exposes how this propaganda was based on untruths and half lies.

That assumption that India's independence was the result of non violent movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi—a pet theory in India's history—has also been contested. The most striking part about this book is its argument which is based on sound logic and irrefutable evidence. The author has successfully maintained a fine balance between making the narrative interesting and reader friendly, while avoiding the temptation to compromise on its seriousness.

'*Asatyameva Jayate*' succeeds in dispersing the murky clouds of distortions introduced at almost every step in India's history and places before the curious readers a view of reality. ■

BHOLANATH JI TURNS 100

A KIND-HEARTED AND HARDCORE SWAYAMSEVAK OF RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH (RSS), SHRI BHOLARAM RANJAN, POPULARLY KNOWN AS BHOLANATH JI, TURNED 100 ON DECEMBER 21, 2022. FELLOW SWAYAMSEVAKS, IN THE PRESENCE OF SOME RSS OFFICE-BEARERS, CELEBRATED THE OCCASION, AS HE ENTERED THE 101ST YEAR OF HIS ILLUSTRIOUS LIFE. THE EVENT WAS HELD AT UDASIN ASHRAM IN DELHI

■ NISHANT KUMAR AZAD & YATHARTH SIKKA

Anyone who has visited the Delhi RSS office - Keshav Kunj, from the late 80s to 2014 must have faced Bholanath ji. While he was kind-hearted and caring person for the Swayamsevaks, he was very stern and strict for any unknown person who entered the RSS office. He always kept a close eye on the things happening in and around the Karyalaya. Like a coconut, the tough-sounding Bholanath Ji had a soft core—he has been very caring and soft to the visitors.

Born in 1922 in Layyah of Western Punjab (now in Pakistan), Bholanath ji joined RSS in 1939. Bholanath ji is one of the pioneers who laid the foundation for RSS work in the national capital. After retiring from the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) in 1982, Bholanath ji became a Vanprasthi Karyakarta of RSS and started living in Keshavkunj as a full-timer. He then pledged not to return home and decided to serve society till his last breath. He served as the Vibhag-Karyavah (General Secretary) in the late 1980s.

While commenting about Bholanath ji, his close associates said he has always been a fitness freak and never used a lift. He always used to massage his body with oil before bathing to keep himself healthy. His love for fruits is known to all. "He used to remember food habits and restrictions and medicinal schedules of all the swayamsevaks and senior Karyakartas residing in the Sangh karyalaya. Such has been his loving and caring nature," a swayamsevak said.

The morning of December 21, 2022, was a special occasion for many swayamsevaks and family members of Bholanath ji as the father figure of the entire Karyalaya turned 100. To make the day memorable, swayamsevaks at Udasin Ashram (present RSS office, Delhi), in the presence of senior dignitaries, celebrated his birth centenary with great joy. A small havan was organised for his healthy life on the occasion.

Bholanath ji (center) with his son Baldev Raj (left) and daughter-in-law Mohinder Kaur

Bholanath ji kept mum throughout the yajna and didn't speak a word even when karyakartas and dignitaries residing at the karyalaya came forward and wished him by touching his feet. But when everyone started reciting Hanuman Chalisa, Bholanath ji not just joined the chorus but led the entire recitation, as he has been doing for the last few decades. Such has been his devotedness towards Hanuman and Hanuman Chalisa.

Describing Bholanath ji's journey, RSS Sah-Sarkaryavah Shri Krishna Gopal said, "He is a guardian for us and it is a moment of great pride that we are celebrating his 100th birth anniversary. He has been selflessly serving the organisation and society for decades. He has taught many things to us. "

Speaking to *Organiser* Sah-Sarkaryavah, Shri Arun Kumar said that selflessness, commitment and discipline are the intrinsic values that every RSS Swayamsevak carries in his life. Bholanath ji is an embodiment of the same. He always considered the organisation's work as divine.

Shri Baldev Raj, son of Bholenath ji, told *Organiser*, "After retirement, my father told me that he wanted to dedicate the rest of his life to Sangh and whatever will be the circumstances, do not force him to return. As a dedicated person, he has always worked for the country and society. He taught us the right way of living life. He nurtured leadership qualities in many Swayamsevaks." "He is a devotee of Bhagwan Hanuman and routinely recites Hanuman Chalisa," Balraj added.

His family handed over a cheque of Rs 51000 to Dr Krishna Gopal ji as a contribution to Keshav Smarak Samiti, RSS Delhi Karyalaya. ■

VHP DEMANDS SEPARATE MINISTRY FOR HINDU PILGRIMAGE SITES

VHP'S ALOK KUMAR STRESSES THE NEED TO CREATE A NEW MINISTRY FOR HINDU PILGRIMAGE SITES, SAYING THEY CANNOT BE DEVELOPED LIKE TOURIST DESTINATIONS AS THEY ARE DIFFERENT IN NATURE

विश्व हिन्दू परिषद
प्रैस

(From left) Vishesh Sampark Pramukh Narpat Singh, VHP working President Alok Kumar and National Dharm Prasar Pramukh Sudhanshu Patnaik

■ **NISHANT KUMAR AZAD**

"It is high time to liberate Hindu temples from government control," said Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) working president Shri Alok Kumar on December 20, 2022, while addressing a press conference in New Delhi.

"As per the data given to us by Acharya Sabha, over two lakh temples across India are under government control. These temples give Rs 1,80,000 crore to the governments per year. When the governments don't run mosques, churches and gurudwaras, why do they take control over Hindu temples?," Alok Kumar asked.

VHP working president also stressed the need to create separate ministries at the centre and states to ensure the sanctity of the Dharmic-pilgrimage sites.

Shri Alok Kumar said, "Religious pilgrimage sites cannot be developed like tourist destinations because they are way different from each other in their nature. Hence, it is our demand that a separate ministry should be created for the development of religious pilgrimage sites."

Speaking about 'love jihad' and 'religious conversion', Alok Kumar said, "VHP through *Dharma Raksha Abhiyan* will not only awaken the nationals against religious conversions and love jihad being done, but will also free the nation from this menace."

Notably, the 10-day campaign, Dharma Raksha Abhiyan has started from December 21 to December 31, 2022.

While elaborating the campaign details, Shri Alok Kumar said, "VHP has issued a clarion call against the undermining agenda that threatens the national unity and territorial integrity of Bharat. The society now looks for a permanent solution. The organisation will create mass awareness through all possible means of communication".

"Even our Supreme Court is concerned about religious conversions — by allurement, by fear and by fraud. Strict laws should be made against conversion," he added.

VHP claims that since 1966, the organisation has saved 62 lakh Hindus from religious conversion and brought 9 lakh back to their original fold with respect. "Around 25 thousand Hindu daughters were also saved from getting trapped in the clutches of love jihadists," he informed.

Shri Alok Kumar said, "Through a special campaign, *Sansad Sampark Abhiyan*, we are meeting with Members of Parliament from all over the country to draw their attention towards the issues of Population imbalance, liberate Hindu temples from government control and creation of separate ministries at the centre and states for Hindu pilgrimage sites." VHP has reiterated the demand for the enactment of central laws to control the population and put a curb on illegal religious conversions. The VHP is of the firm belief that a central law to control population is the need of the hour. Shri Kumar said that VHP functionaries had discussed these issues with a total of 286 parliamentarians cutting across party lines, including 225 Lok Sabha and 61 Rajya Sabha so far under the *Sansad Sampark Abhiyan* in a bid to build a consensus. VHP had also met with MPs from minority communities from Kerala and Jammu & Kashmir.

"On the issue of population control, however, some of the parliamentarians belonging to minority communities felt that enactment of a law would not be a right way to address the issue and this should be resolved through advocacy and campaigns," Shri Alok Kumar further added.

Also, the VHP maintained, "The marriageable age is an important factor in the present time and it supports the government's idea of making 21 as marriageable age for both men and women. ■

DEFENCE SCAN
BY
AIR MSHL PK ROY (RETD)

RAKSHA MANTRI LAYS WREATH AT NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL ON THE OCCASION OF VIJAY DIWAS

RAKSHA Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh laid a wreath at National War Memorial on the occasion of Vijay Diwas on December16, 2022 and paid homage to the Armed Forces martyars who fought courageously in the 1971 war in service to the nation. In his message in the visitors' book, the Raksha Mantri wrote: "The nation will remain indebted to the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifices while protecting the sovereignty of the nation."

COMBINED GRADUATION PARADE HELD AT AIR FORCE ACADEMY

ON December 17, 2022, a Combined Graduation Parade was held at Air Force Academy in Hyderabad on the successful culmination of the training of Flight Cadets of Flying and Ground duty branches of the Indian Air Force. Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan, Chief of the Air Staff, Bangladesh Air Force was the Reviewing Officer of the parade. It was the first time that the parade was reviewed by a Foreign Service Chief. In his address, the Bangladesh Air Chief said that India and Bangladesh had an "umbilical connection."

RFI FOR 155 MM / 52 CALIBRE MOUNTED GUN SYSTEM

MoD has issued RFI for purchase of 155mm/52 Calibre Towed Gun Systems. These Gun Systems are required to be employed in plains, mountains up to 5000 metres (16,500 feet), desert and semi desert terrains. These should be able to fire all in-service ammunition at the time of trails including precision ammunition. The weight of the system should be preferably less than 15 tons. The fire control systems should also have the capability to provide day and night direct and indirect firing. FCS should be compatible to Project Shakti. The gun should have the builts in test facility (BITE) to support fault finding and repair of equipment.

(https://www.indiandefensenews.in/)

INDIGENOUS STEALTH GUIDED-MISSILE DESTROYER INS MORMUGAO COMMISSIONED BY RAKSHA MANTRI

मोरमुगाओ
MORMUGA

INDIAN Naval Ship (INS) Mormugao (D67), second warship of the P15B class of stealth guided-missile destroyers, was commissioned in the presence of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai on December 18, 2022. The event marked the formal induction of the second of the four 'Visakhapatnam' class destroyers, indigenously designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organisation Warship Design Bureau and constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai. In his address, the Raksha Mantri described INS Mormugao as one of the most powerful indigenously-built warships which will significantly enhance the country's maritime capabilities and secure national interests.

DELIVERY OF FIFTH SCORPENE SUBMARINE 'VAGIR' TO INDIAN NAVY

The fifth submarine of the Project – 75, Kalvari Class submarines, Yard 11879 was delivered to the Indian Navy on 20th December 2022. Project – 75 includes indigenous construction of six submarines of Scorpene design. These submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France. Launched on November 12, 2020, Vagir commenced the sea trials from February 1, 2022 and completed all major trials including the weapon and sensor trials in the shortest time in comparison to the earlier submarines.

IDEX-DIO SIGNS 150TH CONTRACT FOR DEFENCE INNOVATION

Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the flagship initiative of Department of Defence Production, have reached a milestone with the signing of its 150th contract. The contract relates to an Indian Navy project of the Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC 7) SPRINT edition and the winner was Altair Infrasec Pvt Ltd, Pune. The iDEX framework was launched by the Prime Minister in 2018 with the objective to provide a platform of co-creation and co-development in the defence sector, engage start-ups and develop defence and aerospace set up in the country.

LAUNCH OF 'ARNALA', FIRST SHIP OF ASW SWC (GRSE) PROJECT

अर्णाला
ARNALA

'Arnala' , the first of 08 x ASW SWC Project, being built by GRSE for Indian Navy was launched on December 20, 2022 at M/s L&T, Kattupalli, Chennai. The Launch Ceremony was graced by Smt Rasika Chaube, Financial Adviser (Defence Services), Ministry of Defence. Arnala class of ships will replace the Abhay class ASW Ships of Indian Navy and are designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO) including sub-surface surveillance in littoral waters.

INFORMATION GIVEN BY RAKSHA RAJYA MANTRI SHRI AJAY BHATT IN RAJYA SABHA

Status of Country's Defence Exports: Department of Defence Production issues authorisation for export of Munitions List items covered in Category 6 of Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies. At present, the exports are being made to more than 75 countries all over the world. Names of the countries cannot be divulged due to strategic reasons. The export values during the last three years are as under.

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23(till date)
9,116	8,435	12,815	6,058

Development of Border Areas: MoD has entrusted BRO with the construction of roads in border areas, as per priority fixed by Army based on a five-year Long Term Roll over Works Plan. Construction of 257 roads (13525.417 km) have been taken up by BRO during the last five years. In addition, Government is implementing the Border Area Development Programme through the State Governments/UT Administrations in habitations located within 0-10 kms from the first habitation at international border in 117 border districts of 16 States and two UTs. Over the last five Financial Years, Rs 2,975.22 crore have been released to States/UTs. ■

COLUMN

DR ANKITA KUMAR
Independent Researcher

THE UNFORGETTABLE SACRIFICE

THE MARTYRDOM OF 'CHAAR SAHIBZAADE' IS THE PATH BREAKING MOMENT IN BHARAT'S RESISTANCE TO ISLAMIC BIGOTRY. THE WHOLE NATION COMMEMORATES THEIR MARTYRDOM EACH YEAR IN DECEMBER, ALSO KNOWN AS "POH", WITH GREAT VIGOUR, VALOUR AND SADNESS

While the rest of the world has been celebrating Christmas and getting ready for the New Year, people following Sikh Panth all across the world have been remembering Chaar Sahibzaade's sacrifices. Ajit Singh Ji, Jujhar Singh Ji, Zorawar Singh Ji, and Fateh Singh Ji, the four sons of the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh ji, were martyred between December 21 and December 27, 1704 AD. Every person revering and following sikh traditions has a distinct memory of these times, and they recall the Sahibzaade with great vigour, valour and profound sorrow. The four "Sahibzaade" martyrdom is an important part of the Indian history.

The four sons of Sri Guru Gobind Singh, are affectionately referred to as Sahibzaade. "Sahibzaade" alludes to the sons, young men of genteel origin, and "Chaar" denotes four. On the chilled night of December 20, 1704, Guru Gobind Singh ji, his wife Mata Jeeto ji, their four sons, Guru's Mahil, Mata Gujari Kaur, *Panj Piaras*, and several warriors following panth left the fort of Anandpur Sahib, after the Mughals and Pahaadi King took oaths on the Quran and the holy cow, respectively—both of which are revered in their respective religions—and pledged not to attack the fort.

On the night of December 20–21, however, the Mughals went back on their words and attacked the Guru's company at a place on the Sarsa rivulet, about 25 kilometres from Anandpur Sahib. The attack's location is known as *Pariwar Vichora*, and the Gurudwara Sahib constructed in remembrance of it is called as *Gurudwara Pariwar Vichora Sahib*. The attack caused the Guru's family to become divided and

SAHIBZAADE ZORAWAR SINGH AND FATEH SINGH REFUSED TO CONVERT TO ISLAM EVEN AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE, REMAINING FAITHFUL AND FIRM TO THE KHALSA PANTH. WAZIR KHAN THEREUPON MANDATED THE ORDER TO BUILD A BRICK WALL AROUND THEM. THUS BURIED ALIVE IN BRICKS, THE TWO SAHIBZAADE GAINED MARTYRDOM

break away. Guru's Mahil and Bhai Mani Singh travelled to Delhi.

On the afternoon of December 21, Guru Gobind Singh Ji travelled to Chamkaur with two senior Sahibzaade, five *Panj Piaras*, and forty warriors following sikh panth. On December 22, the Khalsa and the elder Sahibzaade, known as the Vaada Sahibzaade—attained martyrdom battling the powerful Mughal army at the young ages of 18 and 14 respectively—engaged in the famous Chamkaur battle, also known as the Battle of Chamkaur Sahib. 40 warriors following panth and three *Panj Piaras* lost their lives while battling the ten-thousand strong Mughal army.

Another member who resembled the Guru, Sangat Singh, dressed up like him and remained in the army. After negotiations fell through, the warriors chose to engage with the vast Mughal troops, allowing the Guru to move. The following morning, the last warriors were put to death by Mughal soldiers. During the conflict, the two youngest sons of the Guru, Zorawar and Fateh, as well as their grandmother Mata Gujri, got separated from the others.

Baba Zorawar Singh, Baba Fateh Singh, and their grandmother were detained by Jani Khan and Mani Khan Ranghar, the Morinda officials, on the morning of December 21, 1704, the day of the crucial Battle of Chamkaur, after Gangu revealed their identities to the Mughal authorities. The following day, they were sent to Sirhind, where they were placed in the fort's Cold Tower (*Thanda Burj*). The famed Gurdwara Fatehgarh Sahib marks this location. On December 23, 1704, Nawab Wazir Khan, the faujdaar, and his feudal ally, Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan of Malerkotla, who had just returned from Chamkaur, produced Baba Zorawar Singh Ji and Baba Fateh Singh Ji before them.

With promises of wealth and honour, Wazir Khan attempted to get the Sahibzade to convert to Islam, but they rejected the idea. He then threatened to kill them, but they didn't back down. The two kids were finally given the death penalty. Sahibzade Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh were given extra time to consider the suggestion to convert after Sher Muhammad pleaded for the lives of the defenceless children to be spared. During the harsh winter, Sahibzade Zorawar Singh and his brother spent additional two days in the Cold Tower on their elderly grandmother's lap. The two Sahibzaade refused to convert to Islam even at such a young age, remaining faithful and firm to the Khalsa Panth. Wazir Khan thereupon mandated the order to build a brick wall around them. Thus, buried alive in bricks, the two Sahibzaade gained martyrdom. When Mata Gujar Kaur learned that her baby grandsons had been martyred, she was unable to handle the trauma and left that very day for her heavenly abode. On December 27, 1704, a horrifying crime was committed in the Sarzameen of Sirhind. The "Chotta Sahibzaade", aged 6 and 9, were killed by the Mughals at Sirhind. Jyoti Swaroop Gurudwara Sahib is the name given to this location in Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab, India. Every year, from December 21 to December 27, the Fatehgarh Sahib Gurudwara holds the *Shaheedi Jor Mela* in solemn memory of this martyrdom. ■

Dr UJWALA CHAKRADEO

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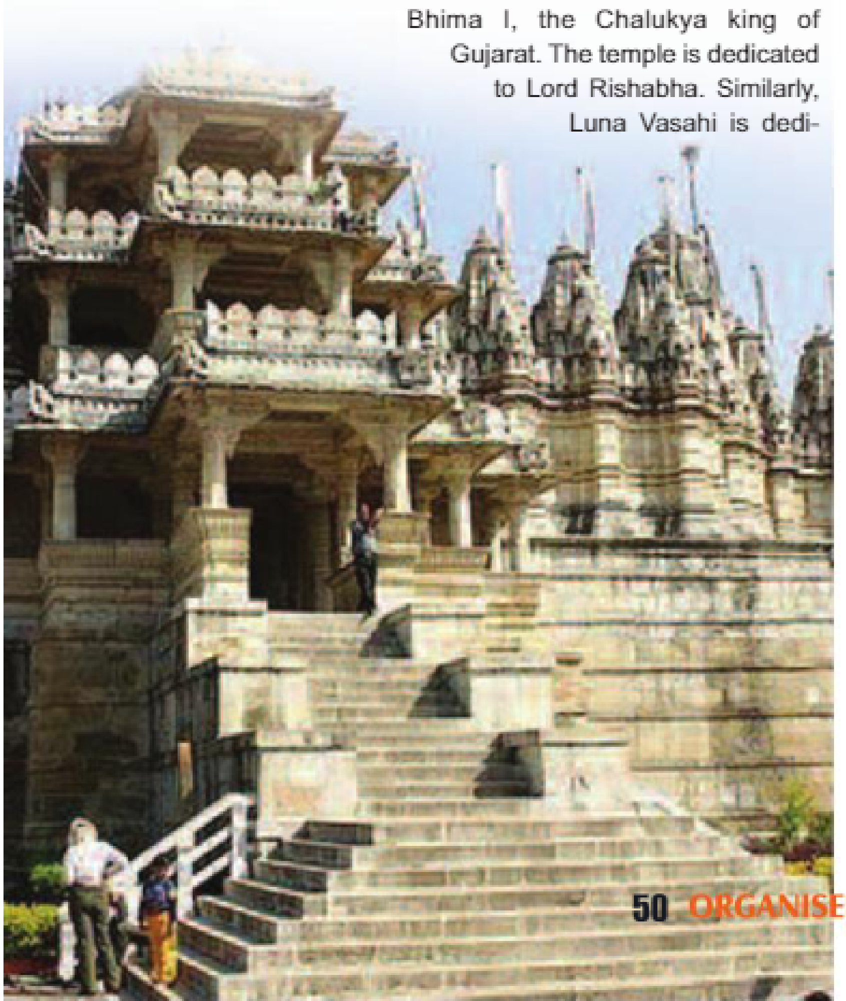
THE ARCHITECTURAL MARVEL

FAMOUS FOR ITS EXCEPTIONALLY STRIKING ARCHITECTURE AND MARBLE CARVING, DILWARA TEMPLE IS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL JAIN TEMPLES IN THE WORLD. THE SHRINE IS ADORNED WITH MINUTE STATUETTES ON THE WALLS, GATEWAYS, ARCHWAYS, PILLARS, AND PANELS

Mount Abu is one of the famous most renowned and tourist places of Rajasthan in India. Five Jain temples, Dilwara temples are also the reason for it. Dedicated to five Jain Tirthankaras, the temples are made out of white marble and are intricately carved out. These are actually the master pieces of marble carving. The marble used for these is a special one. Elephants were used to carry marbles from Srasoor hill at Ambaji to Mount Abu for the construction of the temples. To commemorate their contribution , a Hast Shala was constructed. It is said that workmen were paid in gold according to the weight of marble powder scraped off.

The Adinatha or Vimala Vasahi Temple amongst these, is prominent and most visited. It was mostly built in 1026 by Vimal Shah, a minister of Bhima I, the Chalukya king of Gujarat. The temple is dedicated to Lord Rishabha. Similarly, Luna Vasahi is dedicated to the 22nd Jain Tirthankara, Shri Neminath. The plan of these temples is a typical one. Around the central temple there is an open sky corridor. Beyond the corridor or pradakshina path are the chambers of Tirthankaras embedded in the compound wall. The main central Mandapa does not have walls. Due to the open corridor and no walls, there is ample light in the main hall/Mandapa. This light imparts justice to appreciate the intricacy of the carvings on the ceiling as well as on each and every column of the Mandapa. These columns are connected at the top with brackets and torana like arches. The view of these interiors is breathtaking. The shadows cast during bright days highlight the figures carved in the marble.



The ceilings feature engraved designs of lotus-buds, petals, flowers and scenes from Jain mythology.The figures of animal life, life journey from dream to incarnation of tirthankaras are carved. The Gudh mandap or garbha griha is a simple hall but has a heavily decorated doorway. Installed inside is the idol of Adi Nath or Lord Rishabdev, as he is also known in Vimal Vasahi temple.

These beautifully carved temples have flattened domes as roofs. These domes are very plain from the top and are hardly noticeable. The designers probably wished the attention of the bhaktas to be focused only on interiors, and not the exteriors. One has to be mentally prepared gradually to appreciate the level and quality of art that welcomes us in the hall. However, in recent times, the approach to the temple is flanked by the small vendors of the memento sellers. As you march through this chaos and take a turn, you are greeted by the beautiful edifice. The high level of clutter outside does not prepare one to accept, empathise or to be fully involved with the enormity of art and the carvings. ■

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